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BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE.

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JUNKERDOM'S HUNDRED HOURS.

BY G. WARD PRICE.

I.

If one were asked to choose a building in Berlin to be a monument of the spirit of overweening pride, ostentatious wealth, and unlimited ambition in which Germany made her fatal bid for world-dominion, I would not take the Imperial Schloss, with its memories of Frederick the Great; nor yet those hideous red-brick factories of bloodshed, the War School and the General Staff Offices, where the German sword was sharpened; nor even the Deutsche Bank, where German wealth was mobilised, straddling ostentatiously over a whole parish of the city, with bridges connecting its departments over intervening streets. To my mind the memories of old Imperial arrogance linger still more about the Adlon Hotel, the resort of capitalists and Junkers, the offspring in bronze and marble of the glut of German prosperity that led up to the national fall.

There it stands, jutting out on to the aristocratic Pariser Platz, in front of the historic Brandenburger Thor. It is No. 1 on Unter den Linden, the Kaiser's processional way. The Adlon was to have served as grand stand for the triumphal return of the Imperial armies after the rapid victory expected in 1914, when the conquering troops brought back the overlordship of Europe to lay at the feet of the German Emperor. On the outbreak of war, the all-foreseeing General Staff requisitioned in advance every window of the hotel for the Kaiser's guests at the anticipated festival of victory.

Here, on the 1st of January, the Kaiser used to give an annual dinner to his Generals, at which he delivered a confidential speech on Army policy for the coming year. The Emperor's bust, in the helmet and breastplate of the Cuirassiers of the Guard, still swaggers in stone above the fireplace in the vestibule, though it owes its preservation there only to the ready wit of the hotel manager, who told the mob destroying Kaiser-emblems at the revolution of November 1918 that the statue represented Lohengrin. And in this entrance-hall used to be seen, at one time or another, all the Big Men of Germany,—the Generals, the Statesmen, the Financiers,—the whole galaxy of *Realpolitiker*, whose deliberate aim it was to make *Deutschland über Alles in der Welt* a concrete reality.

. . . . . .

And now, after Germany's defeat, this Berlin hostelry still plays a *rôle* symbolic of the country's reversed conditions, for here live the Allied officers, whose functions are to dismantle the militarist system which the Adlon used to typify.

Seldom within five years has any building witnessed a greater somersault of history; seldom has the overthrow of misguided ambition been more dramatically illustrated; seldom have walls heard more bitter sighs than those of the Junker remnant that yet lingers in this invaded preserve.

Yet Junkerdom has still strength enough to kick. This odd German survival of feudal ideas into modern Europe is dying hard. It has the vitality of all creeds that rest on an ideal. The Prussian Junker, who was the steel ribs of the ferro-concrete structure of the old German Empire, has one quality which gives strength to his cause. He is sincere, with the deadly fanatical sincerity of the narrow-minded, in the belief that he *is* a divinely ordained overlord. He respects his own title and title-deeds as a priest respects his Holy Orders. Pious Junkers would even militarise God: in their private chapels you will see the Messiah Himself depicted in the white mantle and steel gauntlets of the military-monastic Order of the Teutonic Knights.

Politically, the Prussian Junker is as out-of-date as the King's Champion at a British Coronation. And consequently, when a Junker gets control of the machine-guns, he is a far more dangerous institution than ever was his medieval prototype.

II.

The Allies are chiefly responsible for the recent flare-up of expiring Junkerdom in Germany.

In the bad peace which they drew up in Paris, they made the mistake of treating Germans as a homogeneous people.

No country in the world—except a few small states of cognate social institutions like Roumania—contains so divergent interests and such a spirit of class-hostility as does this fifty-year-old artificial nation of modern Germany.

You can make sound generalisations about France, because all Frenchmen, from the peasant in the fields to the President in the Elysée, think on the same lines, cherish the same highly national ideals, labour towards the same ends. You can generalise about the white nations of the British Empire, where racial common-sense and inherited traditional prejudice take the place of the Frenchman's conscious ideals and keen intellectual processes. America, too, has a national character of her own which she quickly stamps upon all her immigrants. But what, except language, has the Lutheran German baron of bleak East Prussia in common with the Catholic peasant of the Bavarian mountains; or the pallid, cynical, Berlin workman of Moabit with the even-tempered tiller of the vineyards of the Mosel? Yet there was no one at the Peace Conference who had the skill to turn these internal differences of Germany to good account. It would have been a great thing if, by skilful statesmanship, the Allies had contrived to differentiate between the mutually opposed component classes that make up the German nation, hamstringing as much as possible the Junkers, militarists, professors, and pan-Germans, who, until they die out, will always be so much political yeast, keeping the German national mixture in uneasy fermentation; while, on the other hand, they made post-war conditions as easy as the satisfaction of the just claims of Allied war-victims would allow for the great mass of the German people, which is capable of being won over to loyal co-operation with the rest of the civilised world.

By its failure thus to exploit the facts of German internal politics, and, above all, by the delay with which it was brought into force, the Peace Treaty has worked as a most useful instrument of propaganda in the hands of the German Junker class, while the German Republican Government, which adopted an outwardly submissive mood towards its stern provisions, has been constantly weakened thereby in its authority over the nation.

This was especially the case in the matter of the surrender of the war criminals. Here the Allies first demanded that Ludendorff and other leaders of the German Army should be given up along with the common murderers and plunderers. Then they withdrew this demand. The German militarists, who had been fulminating about resistance, at once claimed a victory. "Your miserable weak-kneed Government wanted to yield these national heroes," they boasted to their fellow-countrymen.

"We said *No*, and it *was* No. Now you see what stout fellows we are."

That was the atmosphere which the Junkers had contrived to produce in Germany when they started their revolution. If they had not mismanaged it so hopelessly in the most elementary details, if they had had sufficient sense to mask their real aims behind a programme of popular reforms, they would have stood some chance of making good.

There is much that is rotten in the state of Germany. The present Socialist Government has not been able to prevent a shameless system of profiteering in the necessaries of life, which is one of the root sources of the present desperately high cost of living. Moreover, all classes of the German nation that still have anything to lose, and value a quiet life, are genuinely scared of Bolshevism, which in this country seems a far more real and aggressive danger than it looks to observers in Britain or the United States.

A strong, sane, militarist government which showed that it had national and not class interests at heart, and made at any rate a show of liberal principles, might have found a tolerant following among large classes of the German people. But a conspiracy of incompetent, self-seeking officers and aristocrats had no chance at all. And it took Germany but twenty-four hours to find out that Dr Kapp, General Lüttwitz, and their unavowed but ever-present sponsor, General Ludendorff, amounted to no more than this.

The Junkers failed because their attempt was organised by officers, and it has been shown again and again, both during the war and since, that German officers have no political sense whatever. All that they have in its place is an out-of-date class prejudice.

III.

The Junker revolution of March 13 had its first beginnings last autumn in the Baltic Provinces. There, when the war ended, a force was in existence called "The Iron Division," commanded by General von der Goltz, of the same family as the Marshal who reorganised the Turkish Army.

The first order which the Allies gave after the Armistice to the Iron Division was that it should return to Germany, but as the Bolshevist Army was then on the frontiers of the Baltic States, and the retirement of the German troops would have left the door open for Esthonia, Lithuania, and Latvia to be overrun, the Supreme Council decided to send the division back again and use it as a frontier guard against a Bolshevist offensive westwards. The troops of the Iron Division were good fighting material. Their officers had much the same kind of

influence over them that the leaders of mercenary companies exercised in the Thirty Years' War. Discipline that affected their fighting efficiency was strict, but plundering of the civilian population of the Baltic States, whose property they were supposed to be defending, was winked at. The more feared and hated the troops of the Iron Division came to be, the readier they grew to carry out blindly any orders their officers might give; and the latter were not slow in conceiving the plan of using this reckless band of mercenaries as an instrument for the overthrow of the new Republican Government in Germany.

Last December the Allies sent the French General Niessel into the Baltic Provinces to see that this "Iron Division" was at last brought back to Germany for demobilisation. They came, looting as they marched. And on arrival in Germany they were duly disbanded. But the disbandment was only a sham. The officers of the Baltic troops had come to a secret understanding with their men that the latter, instead of going to their homes, should be spread about on various country estates in the Junker province of East Prussia, where, living in idleness on good country food, and with money in their pockets, they should await orders to march on Berlin to overthrow the Socialist Cabinet and establish a Junker Government in its place. Such a prospect was an attractive alternative to the unpleasant one of looking for uncongenial civilian work in disorganised Germany. Large numbers of the men accepted it. The Monarchist party found the necessary money. Thanks to the connivance of Junker staff officers, the disbanded men kept their arms.

In this way was formed the nucleus of a force of reliable troops, ripe for any purpose to which their officers might call them. The hand of the revolutionists was armed.

It now remained to win over to the Monarchist cause a large backing of army officers. This was an easy task. Few were taken so fully into the confidence of the leaders of the Junker movement as to be told actual details of the plot, but their support was assured when the time came.

Melodrama too played its part in this work of organisation. In the Hohenzollernstrasse, one of the streets in the fashionable Tiergarten quarter, there is a large modern house which, during the closing months of last year, was used as an international Allied club by the various members of Allied nationalities who are now living in Berlin. The club was closed at the end of December, owing to the fact that the members of the naval and military Allied Missions had formed a club of their own on Unter den Linden, while the civilian members were not sufficient in number to keep the place going. It was not long, however, before the premises were once more opened as a club-house. A German

club had taken them over, we were told. There seemed to be some mystery about this institution. It was suspected that the new tenants were another of the private gambling associations which are constantly opening new places in the West End of Berlin. But no one imagined what was in fact the case, that the so-called club was the headquarters of the German Monarchist movement. The supposed "manager" was a Lieutenant Rossbach, who had raised a corps of his own in the Baltic Provinces. The clerks were all officers, the waiters non-commissioned officers of the Baltic troops, and machine-guns were gradually hidden in the cellars, to be used in the coming *coup*. It was here that, under the guise of card-parties, the councils were held which planned the Junker revolution.

Noske was warned that this club was not the harmless place it purported to be, and ordered it to be watched. But Junker adherents in his own ministry suppressed compromising reports on their secret headquarters.

It was characteristic of the Junker plotters that they took no trouble to gain the support of influential civilians for their cause. They needed, of course, some instrument to fill the post of Chancellor, and chose Dr Kapp, an East Prussian provincial official. Kapp obtained brief notoriety during the war by a quarrel with Bethmann-Hollweg, who accused him, even then, of misusing the national flag for party ends, whereupon Kapp, with characteristic futility, challenged the Chancellor to a duel. But the Junkers' lack of foresight in not securing the support of any of the staffs of State Departments contributed much to bring about their ultimate collapse.

Twenty thousand troops, the old Imperial flag, and bands to play "Deutschland über Alles" —that was the equipment with which the Junkers set out to seize the power in Germany. Their programme beyond that was vague in the extreme, but they were confident in their own minds that the natural ability, courage, and ruthlessness of the Prussian officer would do the rest.

. . . . . .

The sole prop and mainstay of the Junker plot was thus based on what is left of the German Army. And there was one man in Germany who, ever since the Kaiser abdicated, had held entire responsibility for the army towards the German nation. That man was Gustav Noske, late Minister of National Defence. He has paid for his failure to democratise this stronghold of Junker spirit with the loss of his place in the Cabinet, and the unanimous dislike of all parties in the State. What can be said for Noske is that he did as much as was humanly possible to tame the lion into a watch-dog, but failed because on the first provocation the beast he thought was docile reverted to type.

Noske is a big, burly, self-confident man, with a manner so rough and domineering that the inaccurate report circu-

lates even in Germany that he was once a Prussian non-commissioned officer himself. As a matter of fact, Noske never did military service. When you talk to him you cannot help feeling, though, that if Fortune had happened to change her choice of cradle for him, if he had been born Baron von Noske in an East Prussian Junker's castle, instead of to be plain Gustav Noske in the home of a journeyman basketmaker, he would have been as much of a war-lord as Hindenburg himself.

Noske fitted easily into the post of Chief of the German Army. He took decisions with resolution; his military edicts under martial law were terse and energetic. He quickly came to be regarded as the tower of strength of the Republican Government. The Advanced Socialists, indeed, infuriated by his ruthless repression of Spartacism in 1919, abused him whole-heartedly as a tyrant.

For a time it looked as if Noske really had a firm grip on the wheel. But there was one great inherent weakness in his position which has eventually brought about his downfall. Running an army is a highly technical business, and Noske could only carry it on through the co-operation of the caste of regular Prussian officers whose lifelong study such work had been. These officers, upon whom he came implicitly to rely, were at heart reactionaries almost to a man. Until their own plans were ripe, and only till then, did they make semblance of serving the Republican régime.

The cause of this unfaithfulness of the army officers towards the Republican Government lay chiefly in the forlorn hope that by putting a Junker Cabinet in power they might save their own jobs, which were threatened with speedy extinction by the Peace Treaty.

The Peace of Versailles provided that the German Army should be reduced first to 200,000 men, and three months later to 100,000 men, and the ultimate date fixed for the completion of this whole process was 10th July 1920. An army of 100,000 men needs at the most 4000 officers, but 32,000 officers of the regular German Army alone came back from the war, so that no less than 28,000 of these were now doomed to start life all over again, among civilians whom they had always despised as an inferior race.

IV.

The pretext which the Junkers chose to put all these favourable conditions to good use on their own behalf was a flimsy one. The demand was first put forward in the reactionary organs of the German Press that the Cabinet should be reorganised by the admission of four non-political "expert" ministers. They demanded in fact that repre-

sentation out of all proportion to their political strength or influence in the country should be given to them in the Cabinet. The alleged ground for this demand was that the existing Government was blind to the imminent danger of a Bolshevist offensive against Germany, and that the constant reduction of the German Army which, according to the Peace Treaty, the Cabinet was carrying out, exposed the country to certain invasion and anarchy. No effort was spared by the Junkers to make the flesh of the Allies creep in the same way. Ludendorff himself sought every opportunity of meeting privately any Allied national in Berlin, to whom he would develop his scheme for a joint German and Allied offensive against the Russian Red Army this spring. If his scheme were not adopted, he prophesied grimly, all Europe would be submerged in a flood of Bolshevist anarchy.

But neither in their demand for Cabinet representation, nor in their agitation of the Bolshevist bogey did the Junkers have success. Meanwhile time was pressing. If the Junkers were to act at all, they realised that they must do so before the progressive disbandment of the army weakened them too much in their main weapon, which, after all, was not negotiation but brute force. In particular, they needed to anticipate the dissolution on April 1 of the Marine Brigades of Kiel and Wilhelmshaven, commanded by Captain Ehrhardt, a formation that had already stood its trial in such work as that for which they now intended it, since it had played a decisive part in the crushing of the Spartacist risings in Berlin at the beginning of 1919.

On March 11 General von Lüttwitz, commander of the Berlin garrison, who had hitherto passed for Noske's right-hand man, demanded to see the President of the Republic, who received him in Noske's presence. The General adopted a tone of threatening insubordination. "In the name of the army," he demanded that "expert" Ministers from the ranks of the reactionary party in the State should be taken into the Government. His manner, and the entirely unconstitutional nature of this attempt to interfere with the political life of the State, admitted of only one reply. General von Lüttwitz was relieved of his command. He turned with a sneer to Noske as the Minister announced his intention to issue this order: "You have not the power to carry it out," he said.

When Lüttwitz left the Chancellor's palace his mind was made up. He got into his motor-car and drove straight out to Döberitz Camp, ten miles westward of Berlin, where lay the Marine Brigade and details of the Baltic troops —the latter ready to be joined at a moment's notice by many of their former disbanded members.

Not till next day did the Cabinet hold a meeting to discuss the trouble which was obviously brewing in the higher ranks of the Berlin garrison. They were by no means aware

how far the preparations of the conspirators had already gone. Noske's staff had kept him in the dark, and he pooh-poohed the likelihood of the movement of disaffection taking an active form. He announced that he had issued warrants of arrest, in his capacity as administrator of martial law, against Dr Kapp, the principal civilian ally of the militarist malcontents, together with Captain Pabst, who was known to have played a subordinate part in the organisation of the trouble. These measures against people who were instruments rather than promoters were all that Noske took.

About midnight on March 12, however, the Cabinet suddenly realised that they were confronted by a serious military revolution, for the news reached them that the troops at Döberitz Camp were parading for a night-march on Berlin. Between midnight and 3 A.M. late-returning Berliners found the streets of the city, to their complete amazement, looking like those of a town a few miles behind the front in war-time during an advance. The Reichswehr troops, quartered in the barracks in the centre of the city, had been turned out; the "Green Police"—a picked gendarmerie of Noske's own creation—were concentrated round the Ministerial quarter, 9000 men in all; field-guns were posted at commanding street corners; barbed-wire barricades were being hurriedly erected; there was every sign of preparation for street-fighting on a large scale.

Meanwhile, along the dead-straight "Döberitz Army Street," the asphalt avenue which was made to connect the Kaiser's palace direct with the chief military station near the capital, sped a motor-car containing Generals von Oven and von Oldershausen, sent by Noske to parley with the mutineers, and try to dissuade them by grave warnings of the Government's preparations for resistance. This mission failed entirely. The Generals found Döberitz parade-ground already filled with troops falling-in under the white light of the electric arc-lamps. General von Lüttwitz, till recently their chief, told them curtly to return to Berlin and inform the Government that by 6.30 A.M. the Junker troops would be at the Victory Avenue, a couple of hundred yards from the Brandenburg Gate, which is the entrance to the heart of Berlin. If by that time the Cabinet had not accepted the demands already made for the inclusion of Junker Ministers in the Cabinet, the various Ministries and Government offices would be seized by force.

With this alarming report the Generals drove at top speed of their car down the deserted Army Street back to the capital. Already outposts of the Government troops were posting themselves in the suburbs, but the spirit of the men was dubious. Whom were they going to fight? they asked. Why should they be called to fire on compatriots in uniform?

Noske and Ebert, the President, had been driving round

the streets of Berlin all night, watching the preparations for resistance, but at 4 A.M. on Saturday morning, the 13th, the Cabinet met again at the house of the Chancellor in the Wilhelmstrasse. General von Oven made his report from Döberitz. The Government had to take an immediate decision. Should they fight or fly? Noske said, Fight! "With a couple of dozen machine-guns the whole thing can be crushed," he urged, and wanted to lead the resistance personally. General Reinhard, who had been Military Governor of Berlin during the Spartacist rising last year, and shown himself a heavy-handed soldier, supported the Minister, but the majority of such senior officers of the Ministry of Defence as had remained faithful to the Cabinet were of a contrary opinion.

The other Ministers, too, insisted that the Government must do everything they could to avert civil war, and by 5 A.M. it had been decided that the Cabinet should evacuate the capital and remove the seat of national government to Dresden. Otherwise, as Dr Schiffer, the Minister of Justice, who was destined to play a conspicuous part in the events of the next few days, pointed out, they would be arrested by the intruders, and with that would lose all practical claim to authority in the country. It was essential that they should remain a Government *de facto* as well as *de jure*. Schiffer himself, it was decided, should remain in Berlin to keep in contact with the rebels.

By this time the population of Charlottenburg, the West End suburb which lies beyond the Tiergarten, were awakened from their beds by the unusual din of "Deutschland über Alles" and Prussian marches being played with gusto by military bands. They looked from their windows upon a spectacle that to most of them seemed entirely unaccountable, for there, marching past in all the pre-war pomp and pride of the German Army, was a long grey column of troops, at the head of each company in which was carried the old, abolished, Kaiser's naval war-flag of an iron cross on a black ground. It must have looked to most of them as if the Monarchy had been restored as by a miracle overnight, for till then practically no inkling of the Junker conspiracy had reached the general public.

Heading the column was a motor-car containing General Lüttwitz and Dr Kapp, the military and civilian leaders who were to overturn the political fortunes of Germany. In another car followed Colonel Bauer, reputed to be the ablest General Staff-officer of the German Army, friend and confidant both of the ex-Crown Prince and of General Ludendorff, and with him, Trebitsch Lincoln, a Hungarian Jew, whose record of adventure and crime amused all England and America during the war. Trebitsch Lincoln had last vanished from the public eye in 1915, when he was sent to a British jail to serve a sentence of three years for forgery. Before that he had fulfilled

rôles so diverse as those of assistant in a Presbyterian mission-station in Canada, curate in the Church of England, member of the British Parliament, private secretary to a well-known Englishman of philanthropic reputation, and attempted German spy. On release from prison he had been deported to Hungary, where during last winter he attached himself, with characteristically adroit parasitism, to the Monarchist movement. At the same time he had contrived to impress the supposedly able Colonel Bauer with a sense of his reliability, and despite all his past record of deceit and brazen bluff, his impudence and resource had secured for him a minor post in the Junkers' undertaking.

Thus led, the Marine Brigade and the Baltic troops marched on Berlin. There were only some five thousand men in the column, but the Potsdam garrison, naturally susceptible to Monarchist propaganda, was also on the way to the capital at the same time. The total number of troops supporting the Junker *coup* was in all some 20,000.

It was by now broad daylight, and the Government troops posted in the Tiergarten had received no orders to open fire upon the advancing mutineers. Outpost after outpost accordingly let them pass without challenge, and when the column reached the Brandenburg Gate, and halted just outside the centre of the city, the officers of the Reichswehr, who had taken up a defensive position there, marched their men off down the Linden, and the entrance to the city was left clear.

V.

With bands crashing out the old triumphant marches, and with standards dancing gaily in the sun, the Junker Army swung on through the Brandenburg Gate and took over possession of Berlin. For the moment the revolution was bloodless and complete. As the first of those sinister-looking Baltic infantrymen wheeled into the Wilhelmstrasse, which is the heart of Ministerial Berlin, the members of the Cabinet they had driven out were already swiftly passing the southern suburbs of the city on their way to Dresden.

But with that brief success of their actual entry, the life died out of the Junker movement altogether. From that moment onward its leaders remained helplessly inert. Their seizure of the capital had been unexpectedly easy, but they were unable to exploit it. Meanwhile the Government, which for the moment they regarded complacently as being in ignominious flight, had already set in operation against them the deadliest instrument which any modern ruler can have to combat,—the weapon of the General Strike.

Yet, though the newly-installed Junkers did not

realise it, they had, just for a few hours, a sporting chance of winning at least one half of the population of the capital over to their side. For throughout the whole of that Saturday morning, the attitude of the middle classes was not ill-disposed towards them. The average German is a conservative, orderly-minded person, whose whole soul cries out against the unsettlement prevailing in his country, and desires nothing better than an authoritative capable government to take him in hand and control his existence in the old familiar way to which he was accustomed under the Monarchy.

But the newcomers did nothing except suppress the newspapers and close the streets with posts of soldiers armed with rifles and wooden-handled bombs.

Kapp had meanwhile taken up his quarters in the Chancellor's Palace in the Wilhelmstrasse, a low two-storey house, noteworthy only for its memories of Bismarck, and for the fact that the Congress of Berlin held some of its sittings there. He sent for Schiffer, the Minister of Justice, who happened also to hold the post of Vice-Chancellor in the Bauer Cabinet, and informed him that the old Government had ceased to exist. Schiffer replied that he would only surrender his own office if obliged to do so by force, and he was in consequence put under the guard of an officer in his official residence for the rest of the day.

The sole statement of policy which Lüttwitz and Kapp had prepared as a justification to the nation of their seizure of power was a laconic announcement of the dissolution of the National Assembly. And even this they were unable to convey to any large section of the population, for the printers at once refused to handle proclamations of the Junker usurpers, and the only way the manifesto could be distributed was in typewritten form. Only in the course of the following night did they manage to produce a printed programme of promises, which, however, were too vague to revive the already fast-cooling feeling of interest which the events of the morning had aroused.

For by Saturday evening the people of Berlin had realised that the men who were trying to make themselves masters of the country were the same narrow-minded, self-satisfied militarists whose claim to be reverenced as a superior caste had been admitted readily enough before the war, but a revival of whose pretensions since Germany's defeat would be intolerable.

Throughout the week-end Junkerdom was regarded by the mass of the population chiefly as a show. The soldiers picketing the streets were surrounded by throngs of idlers. In the absence of newspapers the mere waiting about to pick up rumours became an occupation in itself. But the yeast of resentment was rising. In and out among the crowd moved Socialist agents, join-

ing in the arguments that went on at every street corner, passing from hand to hand secretly printed copies of the 'Vorwärts,' circulating the order of the Trades Union Council for the General Strike to begin on Monday.

And even while the ordinary activities of life continued for the moment to function, Dr Kapp and his colleagues were confronted with the difficulty that the permanent staffs of the various Ministries, by a very great majority, refused their support to the Junker claimants of authority, and proclaimed their faithfulness to the evicted Government, which had by now formally announced its continued existence at Dresden, and was organising South Germany against the usurpers. The lack of foresight about details which the militarists had shown appeared hour by hour as a more fatal omission.

From this time on, until its ignominious collapse in the middle of the following week, the Junker clique, which had seized upon the outward forms of government, reminded one of nothing so much as of some wild beast that has escaped from its cage, and stands stupidly bewildered by the novelty of its surroundings until its keepers have made preparations to capture it again.

VI.

On the afternoon of this first day of the "new régime," as it ambitiously styled itself, I went to the Chancellor's Palace in the Wilhelmstrasse, which throughout the whole five days was the headquarters of the Monarchist usurpers. To get there one had to pass close scrutiny from the steel-helmeted Baltic troops and members of the Marine Brigade who manned the thick barbed-wire barrier that had been thrown across the end of the Wilhelmstrasse where it joins Unter den Linden. The former were distinguished by a swastika, which they were painted on the front of their helmets; the latter bore on the arm a metal badge representing a boat under sail. They were mostly youths of nineteen to twenty-one, belonging to the generation of boys which reached manhood during the European War, unsettled in their ideas, and lacking the discipline of proper education. Their officers, too, were very young,—smart, slim, active-looking fellows, who had evidently tasted of the adventure of war, and had as yet no taste for the anti-climax of a return to civilian life.

The Wilhelmstrasse was full of troops; almost every house had a small garrison billeted upon it. Opposite the door of the British Embassy stood a field-gun, still wearing the colours of camouflage. The Wilhelmsplatz, where stands the embassy of the United States, was a point of concentration. Guns, ammunition waggons, motor-lorries for transporting troops quickly to other parts

of the city, lined the roadside. Troops lay on the grass of the square in the sunshine, sleeping with a soldier's placid indifference to the oddness of the political situation created by their own presence there; two heavy armoured motor-cars, each with five machine-guns, raked, for street-fighting purposes, to an angle which would command first-floor windows on either side, were just returning from a patrol through the outlying parts of the capital. A skull-and-cross-bones was painted on their sides; their appearance, together with the formidable din they made, was not calculated to reassure the more timid of the population as to the benefits of the new political situation.

Dr Kapp's house itself was the scene of a confused activity which was characteristic of the whole Junker undertaking. The atmosphere in its crowded rooms and corridors was one of vague willingness to assist, combined with complete inefficiency and lack of organisation. All the reactionaries of the capital, old and young, male and female, seemed to have collected at the Chancellor's house to exchange complacent gossip about the "success of the movement," to offer congratulations, and to get in the way. Retired old Prussian officials, with bristling moustaches, heads shaved bald as coots, and a bearing of ramrod stiffness, were handing in their cards to see one or other of the heads of the movement, with no more useful purpose than to give "assurances of their support," and to ask for news. Their sons and nephews had arrayed themselves in war-time uniforms with all their decorations, and had come to "put themselves at the disposition" of General Lüttwitz. The improvised reception and clerical staff, consisting of young counts and barons, aided by their sisters, the countesses and baronesses, were much too polite to refuse any one. Everybody was affably asked to sit down and wait, so that the confusion prevailing on the ground-floor of the Chancellor's house was like a stock exchange at midday.

On the floor above, Kapp himself held permanent confabulation with an unceasing series of colleagues and subordinates. He was in a large council-room that opens off the ballroom. As I crossed the latter, Ludendorff came out from Kapp's room and walked with quick nervous step towards the staircase. He was in civilian clothes, and the look of intense self-consciousness that is habitual to him did not mask the expression of grave pre-occupation in his eyes. The chattering hangers-on of militarism downstairs might be filled with blatant satisfaction, but the high priest of their order was obviously anything but satisfied with the auguries.

Kapp was surrounded by a group of his civilian assistants, all men of secondary standing, who were eagerly waiting to consult with their chief. In a corner of the room stood Lüttwitz, in field-grey General's uniform, a spare earnest figure,

deep in conversation with a circle of officers who stood, as it seemed, half-unconsciously yet perceptibly a little apart from the civilian Junkers bustling round the new-fledged Chancellor. Kapp was a tall, burly, bronzed figure, with that heavy obstinate cast of face that tells of a narrow outlook upon life. Small eyes, set too close together, peered through myopic pince-nez. The left side of his face was scarred with the parallel ridges and slashes of the sabre-cuts he had received in the duels of his student days. Prejudice of a dogged, downright kind was written all over the man, and in his presence there was none of the thrill and the stimulus that men by nature fitted to be leaders of their fellows spread around them.

The account which I heard from Dr Kapp himself of his own plans, and of the aims that had impelled his party to this desperate throw, was as uninspiring as his own personality. He spoke in the cut-and-dried conventional phrase of politics. What was more, he hedged quite obviously. The attitude of the Junker Government towards the Peace Treaty? Well, they would, of course, do their best to fulfil it,—fulfil it, that was to say, so far as this might be compatible with the honour of the German people, so far as it was economically feasible, and so far as its execution was not self-destructive for the German nation. "I hope our goodwill in this respect will be recognised by our former adversaries," added the temporary Chancellor lamely.

He denied, with much insistence, the suggestion that a restoration of the Monarchy lay within the scope of the Junker movement. "Such tendencies are far from us," he asserted. I glanced at the face of one of Dr Kapp's "Under-Secretaries," who had admitted to me that same morning that while the Junkers recognised that the German nation was not "ripe" for a return of the Imperial family, they hoped in a year or so to be able to place another Kaiser on the throne. It was set in a mask of imperturbability. Bluff and sham! Successful revolutions, one felt, needed firmer foundations than these.

"This is not a military dictatorship," went on the Junkers' Chancellor. "It is a civil dictatorship. By a strong authoritative Government we shall restore economic and financial prosperity to Germany."

By this time the throng of minor Junkers at the "Chancellor's" elbow had increased so much that he turned away, and was immediately engulfed in flurried consultation with his subordinates.

From the Reichskanzlei and from the Foreign Ministry, where the irrepressible Trebitsch Lincoln gave, in Anglo-Saxon eyes, an amusing air of roguery to the whole affair, news was being industriously put into circulation of the enthusiastic adoption of the Junker Government by the whole of the rest of Germany. But despite the suppression of the whole of the Berlin Press, the truth gradually filtered through the capital that it

was only in the Junkers' home province of East Prussia that the civil population had shown any approval of the *coup-d'état*. Elsewhere the Reichswehr troops, left without news or orders from the constitutional Government, had very naturally acted under the personal influence of their officers, and in places where the latter were of reactionary character, or had been won over by Junker intrigues, the black, white, and red flag of the old Imperial Germany was hoisted, which the Monarchist usurpers had taken as their standard in opposition to the black, red, and gold of the Republican Government.

It was generally known by this time, too, that the Ebert-Bauer-Noske Cabinet was still in being at Dresden, and had convened the National Assembly to meet on Wednesday at Stuttgart; and meanwhile the temper of the population of Berlin had become more sullen. They scowled at the patrols that constantly passed along the streets. Officers driving by in requisitioned cars, or swaggering along on foot with automatic pistols at their belts, were a target for black looks and muttered curses. "They want to put the old shackles on us again," you heard constantly repeated among the crowds that thronged the Linden. "We will never let them do it."

VII.

This spirit of opposition found its rallying-point about the Trades Union Council, whose chiefs became the leaders of the anti-Junker resistance in the capital. The Independent Socialists among them had been the fiercest enemies of the Majority Socialist Coalition Cabinet that was now in exile, but they threw all their energy into fighting its battle against the common enemy of militarist reaction. And the evicted Ministry met them more than half-way. This very process of a General Strike, which they had called upon the Trades Unions to organise, had been repeatedly condemned by the Majority Socialist Cabinet as a "crime against the nation," whenever the Independents and Communists had threatened it against the constitutional régime. But now, in the hour of their own need, they were actually calling upon their own supporters to put it into effect, and the leaders of the Reds were quick to realise the immense and unhoped-for opportunity of exerting the full economic pressure of the workers of the country which was thus thrust into their hands. The *bourgeoisie* itself was encouraging them to bring into action the tremendous weapon which they had always dreamed of using to achieve their aim of the "dictatorship of the proletariat."

The Trades Union Council

began preparations for the strike by issuing an ultimatum to the Junkers. Unconditional renunciation by 3 P.M. on Sunday afternoon was the demand they made. Kapp and Lüttwitz replied with what was meant to be a stroke of statesmanlike genius, but only served as an illustration of their own political *naïveté*. They offered the Socialist leaders some seats in the still unformed Junker Cabinet. The wolves invited the bell-wethers of the flock to join their pack, where, no doubt, they would ultimately have been devoured at leisure. This proposal was rejected with emphasis. The brief negotiation thus begun was broken off, and the General Strike was ordered by the Trades Union Council and its allied bodies to begin next morning, Monday, the 15th.

The national strike which was thus brought into being, and continued without interruption for a week, was the most complete which has yet occurred in any country. All grades of labour were united in the one cause. Every one struck work, from permanent Under-Secretaries of State to sewer-men. The nation just stopped. Nothing functioned any more. Water and light even were cut off. No trains, no trams, no cabs circulated; no food came into the markets; no ice was made for the refrigerators; the streets remained uncleaned; the staffs of the hotels left their posts. A feeble and spasmodic restoration of the water and light services was indeed effected from time to time during the week by the *Technische Nothilfe*, a volunteer organisation of non-Trades Union people, chiefly engineering students and the like, which was formed last year as some protection for the essential needs of the community during a General Strike. But the whole complex system of the mutual services which make up modern economic existence was paralysed in Germany by this great movement of passive resistance. The result was that the Junker Government was strangled in its cradle.

On Saturday and Sunday there had been something of the spirit of an idle holiday among the dense throngs that filled the main streets of the city and scrambled for the handbills containing proclamations which were scattered from patrolling motor-lorries or even dropped from aeroplanes circling over Berlin. But with the official opening of the strike on Monday, the temper of the people changed to bitter hostility. They knew the hardship which the process they had set in motion would entail upon themselves and on their families, and they showed openly their hatred of the Junkers and their mercenaries, the Baltic troops and the Marine Brigade.

It was in this way that the series of shooting incidents started which cost the lives of about two hundred Berliners during the week, and sent four or five hundred more to hospital with serious wounds. What happened was almost

everywhere the same. A small patrol or outpost of the Junker troops would find itself surrounded by a hooting crowd. "Bloodhounds! Assassins!" cry threatening voices from the mob. The greater part of it is made up of mere idlers and sensation-seekers, but, egged on by the rowdier elements, they press closer and closer on the troops, who level their rifles threateningly. The crowd jeers at the threat; some of the bolder spirits try to wrest their weapons from the soldiers. Then the patrol fires a ragged volley, blindly. There is a howl of dismay, and the throng breaks back in panic, rushing for side-streets and entrance-porches. Pale with excitement, the young soldiers go on shooting wildly until the street is clear; three or four dead and half a dozen wounded—men, women, or children—remain behind lying in the roadway, their blood oozing over the asphalt.

Such was the meaningless, futile type of incident which occurred a score of times in different parts of the capital during the four and a half days of Junkerdom. Organised fighting there was none, except in some of the pleasant industrial suburbs lying to the east of Berlin, where the local workmen formed themselves into "Red Guards." But even here there was nothing more than sniping at patrols of Junker troops. The more serious fighting that took place was later on, when the constitutional Government had returned and set itself to the task of suppressing the Spartacist anarchy unleosed by the Junker movement.

VIII.

By Monday morning a great number of the supporters of the Junkers had already realised that Kapp and Lüttwitz had no chance of success. The crush in the anterooms of the Chancellor's Palace became significantly less. The most optimistic view one heard expressed was that a compromise might be reached with the evicted Cabinet. The news bureau which the Junkers had established at the Foreign Ministry tried hard to spread the view that the Entente was favourably inclined to their cause, and had, indeed, had previous secret knowledge of the coming *coup-d'état*. But the falsehood was too palpable to have any steadying effect upon their tottering fortunes. They attempted also to distract the hostile attention of the public by Jew-baiting. The streets were flooded with handbills announcing their intention of "freeing the nation from the grasp of Jew profiteers."

Meanwhile the Junkers' one real hope of getting out of their desperate position with any saving of face was centred in General Maercker, commanding the troops in Saxony, who had come to Berlin on his

own initiative to try to bring about a reconciliation between the usurpers and the Cabinet they had driven out. Before he left Dresden Maercker had asked the actual Chancellor of the Republic, Bauer, for authority to open negotiations with the Junkers on these lines. Bauer's reply was short and emphatic: "It's no use. We won't have anything to do with them." Maercker was anxious, however, to save the cause of the militarists from the disaster for which he saw it was heading, and he came to Berlin nevertheless on his own authority. His presence there did, indeed, enable Kapp and Lüttwitz to delude the capital for twenty-four hours with the belief that discussions were going on between the legitimate Ministry and the pretender party. The Junkers announced that agreement was imminent on the basis of the retention of Ebert as President of the Republic, the formation of a new Cabinet, and the holding of general elections within two months. But they knew that this fiction would not long remain intact, and on Tuesday afternoon they approached Dr Schiffer, the Vice-Chancellor and Minister of Justice of the evicted Cabinet, and practically asked for terms. Schiffer showed himself throughout the negotiations that followed both capable and determined. He rejected all suggestions of conditions, and demanded the complete withdrawal of Kapp and Lüttwitz and the evacuation of Berlin by the Baltic troops and Marine Brigade. Colonel Bauer was the Junker agent in these conversations, and used every argument he could devise to scare Schiffer into granting terms on behalf of the Government that would allow the militarists to retire with dignity. Kapp he was ready to throw over without difficulty, and the announcement of his retirement was published next morning; but Lüttwitz—if Lüttwitz went the Junker troops would start fighting amongst themselves, he declared, and a Bolshevist uprising would be inevitable. Schiffer fought the Junkers with their own methods. He is not a man of particularly imposing presence, — of middle height, with a heavy brown moustache, and a curious nervous twitch of the face which occurs continually when he talks,— but he banged the table and hectored the unhappy and disillusioned reactionaries as if he had been a Prussian General himself. All through Tuesday the Junkers held on desperately. Schiffer shut himself up in the Ministry of Justice and said that he would see no one again unless they brought him the unconditional abandonment of authority by Lüttwitz. Some of the Junker officers who had hitherto supported the *coup-d'état* had also by this time realised that all was lost, and a Colonel headed a deputation of them to Lüttwitz with the words: "Excellency, I am your subordinate. You can have me shot if you like, but you must hear me first. You must go, Excellency, for the

sake of the Fatherland!" Only Ludendorff, the *Eminence grise* of this ill-starred undertaking, was for standing out. "We must see it through to the bitter end," he said in one of the councils that he constantly attended at the Chancellor's Palace. But facts were stronger than the influence even of Ludendorff, and at 6 P.M. on Wednesday, March 17, Colonel Bauer sent his promoted confidant, Major Pabst, to Schiffer to hand him Lüttwitz's acceptance of the demand that he should go. The message was hardly in Schiffer's hands before both Kapp and Lüttwitz left Berlin by motor-car for destinations that have not yet been discovered. Their feckless revolution had collapsed.

IX.

I happened to be going into the Chancellor's Palace just after six o'clock on Wednesday evening, the 17th, as Dr Kapp started on his flight. It was a dismal rainy day, but the gloom prevailing in the marble hall of the Chancellor's house was even deeper than that of the grey sky without. None of the hangers-on of Junkerdom were there who had so buoyantly strutted about this vestibule four days before. The unpleasant recollection of the penalties attaching to the offence of high treason was too insistent in their apprehensive minds. People were indeed hurrying to and fro about the building, but they were packing up with all speed.

In front of the door waited an open, grey-painted, army motor-car. Its hood was up, and soaked already with the rain. The seat beside the driver was piled with suitcases, and a white bundle, made up apparently in a sheet, gave a pathetic refugee note to the collection. And then, almost unnoticed by his preoccupied followers, who were making their own preparations for departure, out through the vestibule came Dr Kapp, the Junker Chancellor, whose brief spell of world-wide notoriety had thus come to an inglorious end. For four days he had sat in the seat of Bismarck, and claimed, at least nominally, to rule a nation. Now he was vanishing into the obscurity from which he had come, with the only difference that he would henceforth be a fugitive from the justice of his own countrymen.

He wore a raincoat with turned-up collar, and a soft black felt hat, which he raised sheepishly to the farewells of two officers who had accompanied him to the door. His secretary and his daughter were with him. The latter, who seemed about forty, tried to give an air of dignity to this undistinguished departure by sweeping with her lorgnette the little group of onlookers who were watching the passing of Junkerdom. Then the car moved up the gravel slope to

the gateway, and Dr Kapp vanished from the stage.

That was the end of the Junkers' *coup-d'état*, but it was by no means the end of the trouble they had stirred up. The troops which had supported the militarist rising were still in possession of Berlin, though Lüttwitz had ordered them to withdraw under the direction of General von Seeckt, Mackensen's former Chief of Staff, who had stood aside from the misguided enterprise that had ensnared so many of his colleagues, and was now appointed Commander-in-Chief by Schiffer on behalf of the regular Government.

Would the Junker troops go quietly? That was the question that agitated Berlin for the next twenty-four hours. And what agitated the Junker troops themselves was the question, "Will the Spartacists let us go quietly?"

For the evil spirit of reactionary militarism had evoked its counterpart, the Red bogey of Bolshevism. The General Strike, called in self-defence by the very Government which the German Bolshevists regarded as thoroughly bourgeois, had provided the Spartacists with ideal conditions for direct action. In the industrial quarters of Berlin the Communist party had accordingly begun at once to organise its followers into "Red Guards," which they equipped either with weapons seized from overpowered patrols of police and soldiers, or from the secret stores of arms they had been collecting ever since the revolution of November 1918 for just such an occasion.

And now that their sworn enemies the Baltic troops were so evidently on the losing side, the most bloodthirsty threats were issued by the Reds of Berlin as to the fate of any of them who should fall into their hands. In isolated instances these threats were terribly fulfilled.

X.

On the afternoon of the day following the flight of Kapp and Lüttwitz, the Baltic troops and the Marine Brigade marched out again through the same Brandenburg Gate by which they had entered Berlin in triumph five days before. They were defiant and aggressive to the last, and their exit was marked by one of the characteristic bursts of shooting which had already cost human life in other parts of the capital. Once again the Adlon played a part in the disturbance.

I watched the assembly of part of the column of Baltic troops in the garden behind what was formerly the palace of Prince Friedrich Leopold in the Wilhelmstrasse, which now serves as part of the German Foreign Office—a sullen-looking collection of young men, their faces looming sinister in the shadow of

their deep-brimmed steel helmets. The officers, who moved with an indefinable freebooter-like swagger, were gathered together in a group, talking vigorously, and from their manner it was easy to guess that they were exchanging indignant criticism of the order of withdrawal which they had received. Before the column moved off, the senior officer made a short speech. The Baltic troops and the Marine Brigade, he told his men, had been ordered to return to Döberitz. There had been some talk of their being disarmed when they got there, but they and their comrades would know how to defend themselves against any such attempt if it were made.

Then, with the black-and-white Kaiser flag flying at their head, and their band playing a Prussian march, the Junker soldiers marched out into the Wilhelmstrasse, and wheeled through the barbed-wire barrier on to Unter den Linden.

Here a crowd, thousands strong, was waiting to see them go, and as the head of the column appeared a constantly swelling chorus of jeers and groans broke loose. The Junker troops replied with threatening gestures. The greater part of them had passed the Brandenburg Gate, however, without the demonstration becoming more serious than this, when the temper of the crowd was suddenly roused to action by the gesture of a woman standing on one of the balconies of the Adlon Hotel. Who she was did not transpire; but she was foolishly carrying on a counter-demonstration of her own by waving her handkerchief to the Baltic troops as they passed. With one of those wild impulses that seize upon excited mobs, a rush was made for the entrance of the hotel, which was closed, as it had been all the week, by a light iron grille. This went down with a crash. The two stalwart hall-porters behind it were swept on one side, and already thirty or forty panting dishevelled people had forced their way, or been pushed by the pressure behind them, through the swinging doors into the hall of the hotel. What would have happened next remains problematical; but at that moment the last company of Baltic troops that had passed suddenly turned and fired a splutter of rifle-shots into the crowd. They probably thought the riot going on behind them was preliminary to an attack upon themselves. The result in any case was to clear the Linden in marvellously few seconds. People fell flat on their faces in the mud, or flung themselves against the locked doors of the shops with such terror-stricken violence as to break them open. Here and there lay motionless figures among the scrambling crowd. The bolder and cooler of the onlookers went to their help, waving handkerchiefs in sign of truce, though the Baltic troops had now passed on through the Gate, and the

occasional splutter of their rifle-shots which was still to be heard came from the Tiergarten beyond. A first-aid station was hurriedly improvised at the back entrance of the Adlon. With German thoroughness the hotel-porter chalked up a notice, "Red Cross Bandaging Post—here!" and hung it on the door. Four dead bodies of the twelve that were found were carried in from the roadway and laid down in the Adlon hall, between the newspaper-stand and the reception-desk,—shapeless huddled forms, men all of them, one with his whole face one clot of blood. The cosmopolitans living in the hotel peered at them in horror-stricken curiosity, but the idea of death by violence has become commonplace enough during the last five years, and almost as soon as the bodies had been taken away in an ambulance-waggon the tragedy of their fate was forgotten, and the General-Strike-starved hotel guests turned to the ever-recurring speculation as to whether there was a small restaurant open anywhere that would serve them with a hot meal. For during that week of General Strike, dwellers in hotels were rapidly reduced to most primitive conditions. With beds unmade, floors unswept, boots uncleaned, they lived on cheerless meals of potted meat and biscuit, most of them never venturing out of doors. From sunset onwards candles were the only light they had, and with the stoppage of the water-supply ordinary cleanliness and elementary sanitation became unpleasantly difficult to maintain. The hardy ones made reconnaissances to look for food outside. Occasionally humble little eating-houses were to be found, run by their proprietor and his family personally, where meals were still served in defiance of the strike. To these places people would make their way stealthily, with as much precaution as if secret lunching were a vice.

At night, though, it was really unpleasant to be obliged to go out of doors. The streets were pitch dark, for there was no moon, and all the lighting was cut off by the strike. Constantly one would stumble up against some unexpected barrier of barbed wire, set up after dark by the troops, who then moved out to picket the main streets. "Wer da?" a startled voice would suddenly call out of the black shadows, and a half-excited, half-scared young "Baltikum" would come threateningly forward with levelled rifle, to examine one's papers by the light of an electric pocket-lamp. Their officers had filled their minds with the belief that they were in constant danger of unexpected attack from a Red Army of German Bolshevists, and they were ready to let fly on the least suspicion. From the east and north quarters of the city, where trouble had already occurred with the crowds of workpeople, Very flares were continually being fired into the air to light up dark corners, and searchlights quivered from

every radiating street junction, flooding each dark avenue in turn with a blinding stream of brilliant glare. Occasionally two or three distant rifle-shots would rap out in the silence of the stagnant city, or a splutter of shooting told of some new "incident" that would add its little toll of dead and wounded to the week's list of futile casualties.

But reckless as the Junker mercenaries were in thus firing on the crowd, one instance of the revenge the latter took was more ghastly still. It occurred in the good-class residential suburb of Schoeneberg, on the night of Friday, the 19th, as the last of the troops supporting the revolution were being withdrawn. During the week twenty-five officers of the Junker garrison had had their quarters in the old Schoeneberg Town Hall, and on Friday evening three motor-lorries were sent to take them, their servants, and their kit away. Word had got round among the people of Schoeneberg that the officers were leaving, and a dense crowd gathered in front of the Town Hall to give them a hostile demonstration as they drove away. Scared by the threatening appearance of the mob, the officers inside the building telephoned for police protection, and a small squad of Green Police, who had now resumed their duty in the service of the constitutional Government, appeared to act as escort. Against such numbers as were waiting for the officers, however, the police lieutenant was powerless, and he could only make a speech to part of the crowd and obtain a promise that the twenty-five men inside should be allowed safe passage on condition they left their arms behind. The first motor-lorry, containing ten officers, then appeared through the gates of the Town Hall and slowly made its way through the dense-packed jeering mob. But before it had gone very far the crowd stopped its farther progress. No sooner was the lorry at a standstill than two or three men clambered up its sides, seized one of the officers, and thrust him over the edge into the hands of the excited people. Then a rush was made for the waggon from every side, and all the ten men, struggling desperately but hopelessly, were flung down on to the pavement. The mob set on them like a pack of hounds breaking up a fox. With feet, fists, sticks, the officers were pounded and battered, till horror at their own savagery made the crowd recoil. Four of their victims had been trampled to death, four more were badly injured.

XI.

In such meaningless scenes of violence, with the life of the nation at a standstill, and the spirit of the people inflamed to an unhealthy fever of excitement, this criminal and foolish militarist *coup-d'état* passed into history. There is not a

name associated with it that is not permanently discredited. It had precisely the opposite effect to what its organisers aimed at, and though it was baulked of its own malign ends, it left the state of Germany far worse than it had been before.

The Junkers are directly responsible for the harm done to their country by the Spartacist risings that followed upon it; for though the Spartacist movement would very probably have broken out in any case later on, Germany would then have been stronger from an internal point of view to grapple with it if the Junkers had not ripped open the healing scars of civil disorder.

One manifest result of the Junker failure has been to cripple the forces of reaction in Germany to such an extent that, though still in the field, they may be regarded for the time being as impotent. For their luckless venture had the effect of uniting the two antagonistic wings of the Socialist party, the moderates and the extremists, in common cause against a restoration of militarist tyranny, and it gave an opportunity for demonstrating the crushing power of the General Strike when all grades of workers unite in it whole-heartedly, and it is used for national and not class aims.

None the less, we shall doubtless hear of Junkerism as a disturbing element in Germany again. As a political party the militarists have been badly defeated but not crushed. The same Baltic troops that supported them still lie at Döberitz Camp, and have openly defied the Government to disarm them. The leaders of the last attempt have found refuge beyond the German frontiers, and are planning another *coup*. It is not likely that they will ever be so ambitious as to try afresh to seize the capital, but they may make a bid for power in some more favourable locality, like the Junker province of East Prussia, or perhaps in conjunction with the Separatist tendencies of the Catholic South.

German officers are intensely ignorant of everything outside their own profession, but they are determined, they are self-confident, and they are fighting to keep their own livelihood and their own prestige. With modern weapons, a small military force can dominate a large district easily; so that, while this present generation of out-of-work officers remains unsettled, Germany will always be liable to local freebooting outbreaks of Junker anarchy.

One thing, however, the Hundred Hours has proved—that in the national sense, militarism and Junkerdom in Germany are causes lost beyond all hope of resurrection.

ARABIAN NIGHTS AND DAYS.

BY W.

We reached Um El Surab soon after dawn on a rather autumnal day, which was a reminder that the "lesser rains" would probably start earlier than they did the previous year, which, in Palestine, was supposed to be the longest and hottest summer in the memory of man. Certainly, I do not remember ever being much hotter in midsummer in these parts than at the battle of Khuwelfeih, just after the capture of Beersheba, in October 1917.

The surroundings of Um El Surab were much pleasanter than El Umteiye, because the wells there were dry (we had to send over to El Umteiye each day for water), and consequently, as it offered no inducement for a Bedouin camp in ordinary times, the ground was cleaner and the surrounding plain full of grass. General Nuri arranged a system of day and night picquets as well as patrols by the Ruweilah horse, and altogether we felt safer and more comfortable, especially as the Turks continued to bomb El Umteiye for the next few days, apparently under the impression that we were still there, though the reconnaissance from Deraa never materialised, for the reason, which we did not then know, that the whole Turkish organisation was in disorder as a result of the first great phase of Allenby's victory. Fortunately, the daily bombing never synchronised with the hours at which the cars and animals visited El Umteiye for water.

That morning at Surab we heard that L. and the Egyptian Camel Corps had destroyed another small section of the railway near a station called Ifden during the night. J. left about midday, accompanied by Sherif Nasser, for Azrak, to confer with L. over one or two points that had arisen during the previous twenty-four hours, and before leaving arranged that a further raid on the railway should be attempted that night by a party from the column. It was obvious that so long as we stayed in the vicinity, the more we could interrupt rail communication between Deraa and Ammon, the safer we were. The plan for this particular night's adventure was to send an armoured car with an escort of about thirty Arab regulars and a "demolition party," consisting of K. and four of the French gunners, who understood the business. K. was a young British officer who was attached to General Nuri's staff as Intelligence Officer, and who spoke Arabic almost as well as he spoke English, as he had spent his childhood in Egypt. He possessed the only British batman

in the column, an Argyll and Sutherland Highlander, very redoubtable in action, who had perhaps the most remarkable rôle of any British soldier in any force; for, since K. messed and lived at the Arab Headquarters, his batman resided there also, cooking his own food and living by himself, on terms not of familiarity but of mutual respect with the Arab soldiers — respect based on weeks and months of hardship and endeavour in common. Whenever K. undertook any perilous enterprise, of which occupation he was very fond, he was accompanied by this dour, stalwart Highland soldier. Of the four French gunners mentioned above (the majority of the detachment were from French North Africa), one was a Frenchman born, Sergeant M., a round, rather fat little Frenchman with large spectacles and wondering eyes, but, as I shall presently show, of unquestioned courage.

The officer who commanded the Arab escort was a vivacious and smiling young man who spoke bad French and worse English with tremendous rapidity. He had, however, the merit of being quite fond of "scrapping."

The composition of the force having been settled, there remained the question of who was to be the senior British officer who was to accompany it in command or as "adviser" (whichever you will!), and for this there was some competition, the sport of railway destruction in Arabia having become like fox-hunting, "an image of war with only 25 per cent of its danger," in view of the small number of casualties.

On this occasion the lot fell upon me, so I spent the afternoon in settling as well as I could the route to be taken across the plain to the railway. While a compass would give the general direction, it would not guide us over the very twisting course that it was necessary to take to avoid "wadis" and the patches of impossible boulder-strewn ground. Moreover, there was one wadi which had to be crossed and could only be negotiated by the armoured car at one point. However, K. and I memorised the lie of the land as well as we could, and erected cairns of stones to help our memory when night came. We could not, of course, reconnoitre the last two miles to the railway, as it was essential that the Turks should be unaware of our project. From a distance, however, this part of the route looked comparatively easy.

Soon after dusk we set out. The armoured car throbbed rhythmically over the ground, very slowly and cautiously, with K. and I looking over the top of the turret and directing the driver; whilst the thirty Shereefians, plentifully supplied with Hotchkiss guns, and the four French gunners, jogged soberly along on their camels on our flank, with four men in front and four behind, as advance- and rear-guard respectively.

A wadi, unsuspected by K.

and I during our afternoon reconnoitre, just before we reached the railway, gave the car some trouble, but at last British determination plus Rolls-Royce durability triumphed and she got across. The "wadi" had one advantage, which was that it afforded excellent shelter, for the camels who "barraked" (*i.e.*, made to lie down) in its dry bed were practically under cover against rifle or machine-gun fire from the railroad.

Having crossed the wadi, the Arabs proceeded to throw out picquets each side of the railway; the car took up a position on a knoll where it could give overhead machine-gun fire protection to the picquets if attacked, and K., his batman, and myself started to lay "tulips" at one end of the section of line, and the four Frenchmen at the other. We had sufficient explosives for thirty-two tulips, which, if they were all successful, would mean the destruction of sixty-four rails. As we were so ignorant of the lie of the land, and as camels and an armoured car are at the best cumbersome objects to move out of action at night, we decided that, if the Turks attacked us, we would retire at once without putting up more than a show of fight, and explode what "tulips" we had fixed. For an hour there was no sound but the tapping and scraping of entrenching-tools and picks; then came the welcome moment when both parties had completed their task, and the "demolition party" retired, save for Sergeant M. and K., who were to light the fuses, each starting in the middle and working outwards, the Arab commander and I being in the centre, about 250 yards from the line, where we could direct operations if necessary. "Crash! boom!" went the first two explosions, followed by a third and fourth, when suddenly two machine-guns from the far side of the railway opened fire on us. A second later the armoured cars replied, and we could hear the "swish, swish" of its machine-gun bullets over our heads. The Arab commander, after discharging a Very pistol, which, however useful as a signal to his picquets to come in, had the practical disadvantage of lighting up in the full glare of publicity his figure and mine, retired his men to their camels hurriedly, but in good order, whilst K., who managed to explode all but three of his tulips, and I, hurried back to the car. The Arabs mounted and rode down the wadi, and the car was about to follow them when a French gunner came running up to tell me that Sergeant M. was missing. Here was a quandary, as Arabia is no country in which to leave out your wounded, and it seemed obvious that he must have been hit. K. was just about to go back with his batman and look for M., when, in response to my calls for the latter, a high, squeaky, but welcome voice from the darkness called out, "Ici, mon Commandant, ici!"

It appeared that M. had calmly continued to explode his "tulips," despite the orders to retire if we were attacked. With many expressions of regret for the trouble that he had caused me, he hoisted his brave little person into the car (his camel having got loose in the meanwhile and returned "on its own" to Um El Surab), and, with its human freight packed like sardines, the car proceeded to back out of action, still spitting venomously at our unseen enemy, who must have fired thousands of rounds of ammunition, but never caused us a single casualty. Two hours later we were all safely back at Um El Surab.

My explanation of the Turks' attitude is this. I am convinced that they had a post quite close to where we were working—probably a dozen private soldiers with two machine-guns—but that such was their growing demoralisation, as a result partly of the news which had probably reached them, though not yet us, of Allenby's victory, and partly at the uniform success of our daily and nightly raids, that they decided to lie low and do nothing until the noise of the explosives compelled them to make a show of resistance, in view of the fact that they would be likely to get into trouble with their officer if he knew they had let us once again blow up the line without hindrance. The officer was probably at Ifden, a mile or two away, and whilst he would not have heard our arrival and work on the line, he could not fail to hear the explosions. If this is not the explanation, I do not know why the machine-gun crews which finally attacked us ever allowed us to reach the line at all, or why, if they were a party which arrived after we had started work, they did not make some attempt to scupper us when we retired. Had they worked round to our flank we should have been "in the soup."

The next day (or rather the same day, for we got back just after midnight) we spent quietly at Um El Surab, being still without news or orders; but in the early morning of the 22nd L., in a Bristol Fighter, accompanied by two other machines, arrived from Palestine with the electrifying news of Allenby's great victory. When we heard that Nazareth, Nablus, Janin, Afule, and a score of other places, with 22,000 prisoners, had been captured, we could scarcely believe our ears. We heard, too, of the projected advance northwards to Deraa and Damascus, and of our increasingly important rôle as the force, tiny in truth, but still the only force, between the Turks and their line of retreat. I began to realise with a start that little midnight adventures such as I had lately taken part in were but play-acting compared with what we might be called upon to do in the way of getting between the Turk and his objective, the goal of his fleeing famished army in the North; for his one idea was

to get back as near as he could to far-off Anatolia and comparative safety. I noticed with pride, but not without apprehension, knowing the pure flame of his courage, that L. fully intended that we should worry the retreating Turk as mastiffs of old worried a bear in a ring, oblivious of the possible consequences. He had no intention that the Arabs should take a back seat in the final destruction of the Turkish army. There were political as well as military considerations at stake, as the Arabs knew well, and L. was only playing on a highly keyed-up instrument. L. infected us all with his enthusiasm, and I began to feel, despite my temperamental dislike of adventure *qua* adventure, that it would be monstrous if, when the Turkish fox came to be broken up, the British got the body, head, and brush, and the Arabs, who had helped to hunt him for three and a half years, only got a bit of the pad. If we were in at the military death of Turkey, "Brer Fox," it would make it the more difficult to refuse the Arabs a big share of the results—spoils, if you will—of the victory. Thus really began a fight which was continued in the Council Chamber in Paris, and of which the end is not yet.

While L. and the airmen were having breakfast with us, a Turkish 'plane was observed, making straight for us. One of the airmen was an Australian who has since become world-famous, and he hurried off to down the intruder. This he successfully did, and the Turkish 'plane fell in flames near the railway. He then returned and finished his porridge, which had been kept hot for him meanwhile! But not for him a peaceful breakfast that morning. He had barely reached the marmalade stage, when another Turkish 'plane appeared. Up hurried the Australian again; but this Turk was too wily and scuttled back to Deras, only to be chased by P. on another machine, which sent him down in flames.

After these exploits the 'planes departed, save for one, D.H.9, that remained with us, and, whilst resting on a salt-pan which formed the temporary stable, was bombed in the early afternoon by a Turk; he arrived before our 'plane could get up, and it was noteworthy as being almost the last offensive act that the Turk performed against us.

The most exciting moment of a very thrilling day was the arrival in the evening of the E.E.F.'s only Handley-Page with General B. on board. Enthusiasm had gradually been working up among the different nationalities of the column all day, but it reached its climax when the Handley-Page made a graceful landing. The Arabs always had a great admiration for and interest in the British "Tiyaras,"[1] and the

[1] Literally, "Female Flying Things."

arrival of the Handley-Page, so much vaster than any 'plane they had seen, coupled with the great news of the morning, drove them frantic with joy. We had all been living a life of some strain and anxiety, not knowing what the morrow or indeed the next hour might bring forth, and the relief of knowing of Allenby's victory and what it meant was very real, though I, knowing L.'s plans, was less certain that our trials were over than the troops were. However, all of us, officers and men, British, Arabs, French, and camp-followers, crowded round the car of the 'plane, cheering frantically, some of the less instructed being under the impression that General B.'s spruce red-tabbed figure (an effective contrast to our pirate crew of bearded, ragged humanity) was that of General Allenby himself. With difficulty a way was cleared for him, and a guard of French gunners placed round the 'plane to guard it from the "souvenir"-hunters,—Arabs being as partial as American tourists to that particular and peculiar vice. After a brief colloquy with L., and with Prince Feisul, who had driven up in his Vauxhall car from Azrak to meet the machine, General B. departed on his return journey amid more frantic plaudits than ever, and then the buccaneers returned to the cooking of their evening meal, and the discussion in their several languages of the events of the day.

This was, I believe, the first time that a Handley-Page had crossed the enemy lines by daylight, but General Geoffrey Salmond is a man who always goes ahead, and he was ever very friendly to us in Arabia.

On the next day S., Y., the Doctor, and I, and two armoured cars proceeded quite early in the direction of the railway to blow up once again the line between Mafrak and Nasib. K., with fifty Shereefians and a French working-party, under the redoubtable Sergeant M., preceded us, and General Nuri himself and two of the French guns brought up the rear. A little machine-gun "nest" on the railway gave us some trouble, and a fierce band of Ruweilah irregulars who tried to gallop it had to retire with some casualties. However, a post on the railway was eventually established lower down, after the guns had dispersed a small Turkish force who were working on the line, and sixty-four rails were blown up. We tried to "do in" a bridge also, but the Turkish machine-guns, which were now worked by Boches, sent up specially from Ammon to cope with us, prevented us, and we had to make a run for it in one of the tenders, as the bullets were "ripping" round the wheels and radiator. On the following day L. and I, and an Arab officer, with two armoured cars, each with a crew of an officer, a machine-gunner, a driver, and a spare driver, started out before dawn to try and demolish another piece

of line near Mafrak. It was now more important than ever to make the gap in the railway south of Deraa continuous, since it would facilitate the cutting-off of the Ammon Turkish IVth Army Division, who were being pursued by a force of the E.E.F., detached from Lord Allenby's main army.

However, on this occasion, owing to a gun and a machine-gun post, we failed to reach the railway. We had to back out of action, and the cars sustained some minor damage from bullets, and, so far as I know, we killed no Turks; moreover, with that brutal love that the Englishman has for killing *something* before breakfast, we tried to murder a gazelle or two on the way back by pursuing and machine-gunning a herd, and again failed to score a hit. I have never seen any buck go such a pace. Indeed they entirely outstripped us, and at last vanished into a mirage.

We reached Um El Surab about midday, and the column left again for El Umteiye that afternoon. It had been decided that the cars were to return to Akaba, whilst the rest of the British Mission on camels or mules, and the Egyptian Camel Corps and Gurkhas, who had never got farther than Azrak on their return journey to Akaba, were to go north with the Shereefians and French, with a view to hampering the Turkish retreat north of Deraa, and, if possible, blocking its way to its objective until the British arrived.

In pursuance of this object, the column was ordered to be ready to march at 1 P.M. on the 25th. About half an hour before this time information reached us that most of the Ammon Turkish garrison were plodding along the route of the railway, the line being effectually cut, about four miles away, heading for Deraa. Sure enough, a few minutes later we saw a huge cloud of yellow dust slowly rising on the horizon, and later still one could distinguish through glasses a straggling *mélange* of men, horses, guns, vehicles, and a few motor-cars making their way slowly and painfully along the railway. At a rough estimate there seemed to be 3000 or 4000 men in this echelon. The only attempt at military formation on the part of this pitiable remnant of a once-powerful force, which had inflicted, I believe, nearly 3000 casualties on the two British forces sent to try and take Ammon and Es Salt in the previous March and April, was a sort of cavalry screen on its right flank, supported by a couple of guns. When about three miles from El Umteiye this screen altered its direction, so that it was heading straight for us. The armoured cars were just about to start on their long return-journey to Akaba, but their leader could not resist a chance of having a go at enemy cavalry on a terrain which favoured the cars. The result was several empty Turkish saddles and a quick retreat by the "screen" back to the main body. We had fully expected that we were going

to be attacked. Even in the state that this remnant from Ammon was in, such an engagement would have been a serious matter for us, as we were outnumbered at least by two to one in men and guns, whilst, presumably, further Turkish forces had now arrived in Deraa from the retreating main body of the Turkish Palestine Army. The danger to us on that occasion and during the next two days was that a division or more of the Turkish army, less disintegrated than its fellows, might find us on its main track northwards and consider it advisable to delay its retreat sufficiently long to surround and smash us up. Such a fate had overtaken a small mixed force, composed partly of Arabs, which in 1917 had attempted to delay the Turkish retreat from Beersheba sufficiently long to enable the Australian cavalry to come up and cut the Turks off. It is, however, only fair to Colonel Newcombe, who commanded this force (and whose amazing adventures as a prisoner in Constantinople are related in 'Eastern Nights and Flights'), to observe that he was fighting an enemy far less demoralised than the Turks were on this occasion. There was, however, a good deal of risk to be run by the column, and I am of opinion that we owed much in those few days, before we finally effected a junction with the British, to the good generalship displayed by General Nuri, backed by L.'s advice and genius for thinking ahead of nine people out of ten.

These days constituted the crisis of the career of the column. We had surmounted difficulties and dangers innumerable—in the early days, of discovery by the Turks before we got to our objective; in later days, of being surprised and surrounded, and all the time of being out of water, ammunition, and rations, or of loss of confidence by the Arab regulars and irregulars in the enterprise. Now, with safety absolutely assured if we chose to hide ourselves at Um El Surab or anywhere off the main line of retreat and wait for the British to come up, General Nuri and L. deliberately but rightly decided to take the risk, of what amounted to annihilation, by fastening on the rear flanks of the Turks to worry and delay them and take all the prisoners possible—annihilation, because there were still 10,000 to 12,000 Turks at least, with guns, between us and the British; whilst our column at the moment, together with irregulars, numbered a bare 1000 and four little mountain-guns.

After the skirmish between the armoured cars and the Turkish cavalry, the main body of the Turkish force continued its way northwards to Deraa, whilst we also trekked northwards on a parallel route three or four miles away for El Taiyibe. Just before we started, some of the Ruweilah horse brought in 200 or 300 Turkish prisoners, who had straggled behind the force, to-

gether with a number of transport carts drawn by miserable emaciated ponies, a mass of sores and galls. Even in the Near East, whose inhabitants, irrespective of race or religion, show a callous indifference to the sufferings of animals, the Turks are notorious for their bad treatment of their beasts of burden; but these particular animals made one sick to look at them, accustomed as one was to ill-treated dumb creatures. Their condition could only have been partly due to the retreat, for they must have been starved and misused for months. It is sad to think how little the near proximity of the birthplace of three great religions has affected mankind's attitude in these countries towards the weak, either animal or human. Theoretically, so far as other human beings are concerned, I am well aware that Moslems, Jews, or Christians in the Near East are supposed to help the poor, ailing, or unfortunate among their own people, but I have seen precious little evidence of it. I have always believed that the ingrained tendency of natives of the Near East and Levant to kick and ill-treat anything weaker than themselves was one of the reasons why the average British soldier, especially of the rank and file, so despised, even though his contempt was tolerant, most of the races with which he came into contact on the different fronts in the Near and Middle East. Apologists for the apparent hatred of Egyptian Nationalists for us British almost invariably refer to the contemptuous attitude of British soldiers during the War as a cause of that hatred, but omit to add that it is less the contempt of the strong for the weak, than the contempt of a people, whose great virtue is fair-mindedness, for races who do not know the meaning of fair play. I say "a people" advisedly, for the British troops on these fronts were of all classes and professions, and not one in a thousand would in normal times have seen these countries or contrasted the British system with the traditional systems that prevail there. The result may have far-reaching consequences for us and for the East.

Our way, on the afternoon in question, lay almost entirely, directly we left El Umteiye, over flat cultivated ground, from which the harvest of maize had been gathered. In front and on our left flank, some of them within sight of the enemy and keeping a sharp watch on his movements, were parties of Ruweilah in twos and threes, the vivid colours of their cloaks showing up against the khaki-coloured earth. Behind came General Nuri and his staff, with the Shereefian colours held proudly aloft by a camelman, accompanied by L. and his wiry, businesslike, Arab escort of picked men; next came the Arab regulars, riding their camels like townsfolk and not with the graceful ease of the desert-born men; then the French gunners, the officers on mules, the men on camels, and the

guns also on mules; and next the Egyptian Camel Corps and Gurkhas with P. (their commander), S., H., Y., and myself, with our servants and baggage (which was not excessive), the whole "outfit" on camels, save for Y., who bestrode a mule. I had two days before applied to General Nuri for a Turkish prisoner to act as my servant, as I was tired of being without one, and having to sponge on my friends for meals. I was allotted a big bucolic Turk, by name Ahmed, who was fairly intelligent and very willing and honest. He could not speak Arabic, but I communicated my wishes to him through a Kurdish Arab soldier, whom Y. and I "shared" as a groom. I provided Ahmed each day with three or four cigarettes, as well as with rations from my own allotment, and managed to get him a blanket, a water-bottle, and a knife, since when he came to me he had nothing but the (very inadequate) clothes that he stood up in. Perched on top of the baggage-camel that carried my few personal effects, his lot was cast in a considerably more pleasant place than that of his compatriots, who, weary, foot-sore, and hollow-eyed, their infantry uniforms, which always reminded me of British paupers' dress, increasing their dolorous appearance, trudged along in rear of the column. P. and I had distributed bread and tomatoes among the weaker of these prisoners, and we had put a few poor devils, who were too exhausted to walk, on the spare camels that we had, whilst the French had done the same for others. The difficulty of feeding prisoners increased each day from now onwards, and the conveying of the sick and wounded among them was almost unsurmountable, though the Arabs, to do them justice, did their best. As their numbers increased to an extent which rendered them unmanageable, Sherif Nasser arranged a system of entrusting them in batches to the chiefs of the villages on our road, who gave a receipt for them, and were promised a reward for their future delivery in good condition.

On we went across the plain, undisturbed save by the visit of a British 'plane, which dropped a message to tell L. the latest position of Allenby's pursuing troops, and then departed. From time to time we could see on the horizon the dust of the Turkish force, and in rear of them two distinct columns of smoke, apparently from stations on the railway which they had burnt.

At dusk we reached El Taiyibe, where we halted until dawn, and then pushed on again, the Arab irregulars having spent the night in sniping at the retreating Turks, attacking their piquets, and making some more prisoners.

At dawn next morning we continued our march, and came on an Australian airman, whose machine had been shot through the radiator, and who had made a forced landing. We left

an escort of Egyptian Camel Corps with him whilst he effected his repairs, which he did in a couple of hours. At about 4 P.M. we came in sight of the Deraa-Damascus line near Horeiyik (about fifteen miles north of Deraa), and found to our surprise and delight that it was not held. Our demolitions of ten days before had evidently been repaired, as a train, going southwards to Deraa, could be seen as we approached the line. Whilst the column hurried across, L., P., S., H., Y., and I, and a number of Arab officers, "planted" and exploded as many "tulips" as we could, and cut the telegraph wires. Then we trotted on and rejoined the column, which was heading for Namir El Hawa. We reached that place at dusk and left again as soon as the moon was up, at 10.15. Quite close to Namir El Hawa is the military road from Palestine through Deraa to Damascus, and reports reached us that our friends of the day before—the retreating Ammon garrison—were at Deraa. Consequently, we had some exciting moments immediately before and after we crossed it. We crossed at a point close to the village of Sheik Miskin,[1] which did not belie its name, for it consisted of two score or so of wretched hovels each side of a narrow lane, down which camels and mules could only proceed in single file. Reckoning the time it would take the column to get through, P., Y., and I "barraked" our camels in the yard of a small farm, whilst one of the servants made us some cocoa—sustenance which was very welcome after a march of twenty hours, broken only by two halts of two hours. The village lane was also the village drain, and more than once a camel slipped and fell, thus further delaying the column. The inhabitants, gaunt and suspicious, watched from their doorways, unable apparently to determine whether we were British, Turk, or Arab raiders from the desert. Not one of them addressed a word to any one in the column, whilst in the column itself Arab and French alike, usually so loquacious, glided by muffled ghostly figures in the moonlight. Once a Ruweilah patrol rode up to tell us that the redoubtable Nuri Shalan, their tribal leader, had not yet located the Ammon Turks, but that he was working south of us with the double object of protecting us and "snaffling" more prisoners if he could. Nuri Shalan took Ghazala Station that night, whilst Auda, another tribal leader, took Ezra Station.

From Sheik Miskin we proceeded another three miles, where we halted at 3 A.M. for four hours' rest. When I awoke, just before 7 in bright sunlight, I became aware of an enormous, spectacled, paunchy figure, the most obvious Boche that I ever saw, standing by my stony couch in the charge of an Arab soldier, and pro-

[1] Miskin = "poor" or "miserable."

testing about something in German. He was one of a small band of Austrian and German officers and N.C.O.'s whose cars had either broken down or been appropriated by the fleeing Turks, and who in consequence had fallen easy victims to the Ruweilah cavalry, who had just rejoined us with their night's haul.

I soon understood the reason of his protest, as either the Turks or the Ruweilah had deprived him and his fellow-prisoners of their boots, and, in some cases, of their coats. However, as I had neither the power to get back his boots nor understand his language, I sent him to the French battery commander, who could speak German. He provided him with a camel to ride and some food to eat, and afterwards explained to me that, whilst he would willingly kill any Boche, this man was an officer and a prisoner in distress, so he felt he must help him, adding dramatically, "Moi, je suis un officier français, c'est assez." I accepted the implied rebuke for my want of magnanimity, but pointed out that our only spare camels were carrying very sick Turkish prisoners, who would probably have died by the roadside otherwise. I only got the reply, "Ah, mais c'est un officier," which shows the difference between the Continental point of view and ours where officers and men are concerned.

At 7.30 that morning we trekked again, reaching Sheik Saad, a big, rather pleasant village on a hill, surrounded by fig and olive groves, at 9, and there got an aeroplane message to the effect that a Turkish force of about 5000 men was just outside Deraa on the north, trekking up the Damascus road, and that the advance-guard of a British Cavalry Division was entering the plain west of Deraa, which is roughly fourteen miles from Sheik Saad. As soon as he received the information, General Nuri, with half the column and two French guns, set out to intercept the Turks, and, if possible, delay their advance until the British cavalry came up. Tired as they were, Arab and French alike marched off with alacrity, and came on the rearguard of the force in question near the village of Tafas, where they fought for two or three hours, finally capturing the village and three hundred prisoners. Whilst the main body got through, it is probable that the loss of their rearguard effected the complete and final demoralisation of this Turkish force, who split up the same day into small fugitive parties, continually harried by Arab horse, in their flight towards Damascus.

Tafas is a village inhabited by Arab fellaheen, and the Turks, on the plea that some of the inhabitants sympathised with General Nuri's force, committed some abominable atrocities, even bayoneting children in arms, before the village was taken.

Meanwhile, the rest of us at Sheik Saad spent a strenuous morning and afternoon in preparing, with the aid of the

prisoners, a landing-ground for aeroplanes, a 'plane which had come from Palestine having asked us, by means of a dropped message, to do this.

The Turks, as a result of their days and nights of fighting, marching, and harassing anxiety, on a minimum of food and water, were nearly exhausted, and at first refused to work at all, some of them lying down and calling on their Arab guards to shoot them and end their miseries,—a very foolish young Arab officer, who was in charge of the escort, did not improve matters by his threats and bluster; but at last Y. found a Turkish sergeant who spoke Arabic, and ordered him to "fall in" the prisoners and tell them that the stones had got to be cleared, and that, as soon as they had been, the whole working-party would be given water and food and rest. Meanwhile, Y. told the Arab officer he could remove his escort, since none of the Turks looked like wanting to run away.

This action had the desired effect, and the Turks worked quite well under their own N.C.O.'s. When, after the task had been completed, they were drawn up preparatory to marching back to the spot in a small stone-fenced paddock in the village, where their fellows were under guard, they paid us the rare compliment of asking us, through the aforesaid N.C.O., if they could be allowed to entrust us with their cash, since they understood we were English. Some of them had quite considerable sums of money on them, and were greatly relieved when Y. promised them that, while he could not himself look after their money, he would see that it was not taken from them.

While a cynic might observe that this incident showed rather a knowledge of Arab dishonesty than a trust in British honesty, I found in it only another striking example of the worth that all natives of the Near East attach to an Englishman's honour, which is the priceless asset that has counteracted so many of our blunders and mistakes.

When we returned to the bivouac at Sheik Saad, late that afternoon, the victors at Tafas, tired and battle-stained, had just marched in. Furiously indignant at the atrocities committed by the Turks, some of them were for shooting, in retaliation, the prisoners who had been taken; but better counsels prevailed, and instead a camel was killed and its meat cooked for the famished Turks, and water and bread were given to them. I can see the whole scene as I write. In the centre of the bivouac, in an olive-grove, were the Arab headquarters and the tents of the Sherifs, and, in the midst of them, a large carpet was spread, on which sat the Arab leaders, military and civil, the French officers, and ourselves; hovering on the outskirts were a number of local Arabs, Druses from up-country, emissaries from Damascus, and hangers-on, who had multiplied like magic in the last twenty-four

hours, all anxious to get a word with L. or one of the Arab leaders. Thickly clustered in and about the village and the grove were the different units, regular and irregular, of the column — a kaleidoscopic mass of many-coloured humanity, talking excitedly, singing their age-old songs, or cooking their evening meal. Among them, wandering regardless of accepted rules of army sanitation, were horses, camels, mules, sheep, cattle, many looted from the Turks, and strewn everywhere were Turkish arms and equipment. A stone's-throw from our conference, in a small village field, squatted the Turkish prisoners, the Germans and Austrians a little apart, and retaining some traces of dignity, which were wholly lacking in the Turks. At each corner of the field four machine-guns, their noses grimly pointed at the prisoners, kept watch and ward. The sun was just setting, and the wind soughed through the olive-groves in the village; whilst from afar, Mount Hermon looked down on a scene, so often repeated in these lands in the last 4000 years, of conquerors and conquered—an invincible General, a virile people from desert or mountain or steppe, 500 years of empire, then a crash, a smashing defeat for the one-time universal conquerors, a fresh dominion on the ruins of the old, and the same process repeated. I wondered that evening how many conquering peoples Sheik Saad, an ancient village, built like so many Syrian villages from the remains of a still more ancient village, had seen come and go,—Amorites, Israelites, Egyptians, Hittites, Babylonians, Assyrians, Greeks, Romans, Arabs, Turks; and how many gods and prophets had been worshipped beneath its walls—Christ, Baal, Jupiter, Zeus, Mahomet,—with what result, one asked oneself? Was there less misery, poverty, vice, or crime in this beautiful and, in many respects, fertile land than there was 3000 years ago? Only the glorious colour-scheme of sky and earth, our victories of that day, and the fact that I had just read in a six-weeks'-old paper, dropped by a friendly airman, a speech by President Wilson explaining how the League of Nations was going finally to eradicate the disputes of suffering humanity, prevented me from feeling quite depressed.

An hour later Y., P., and I were entertaining the French battery commander to dinner—a function followed by speeches, some toasts, and an ineffective rendering of the "Marseillaise."

Sleep that night was not easy, tired as we were. That almost sacred respect for other people's "lines," which distinguishes the British Army, was not honoured in the column. People walked and rode through where Y., P., and I and the Egyptian Camel Corps were bivouacked throughout the night. About midnight an outgoing mounted patrol of Ruweilah came

through our lines, knocking over our camp-table, and narrowly missing my head, —one horse, in fact, brushed against the outside of the camel-saddle, whose inside formed my pillow; a little later we heard a man shouting out something in the loud sing-song voice that, in the East, may mean a call to prayer or to massacre. Y. thought he distinguished an incitement among the man's words to go and kill the Turkish prisoners, and jumped up to get a closer hearing; it was merely, however, a verbal advertisement to the effect that the speaker had a captured Turkish camel, which he would sell to the highest bidder. Why he should have chosen 12.30 A.M. to make this announcement, I don't know, except that the whole column was infected with the sort of excitement that characterised even the calm British six weeks later, on Armistice Day; indeed, the column was restless all night, and I was quite glad when at 3 A.M. we started on our travels again for Deraa.

The worst torture in life is not to be allowed to sleep when one is dog-tired, and no one could sleep for more than ten minutes at a stretch in Sheik Saad that eventful night. Information had come during the night that the British cavalry would enter Deraa some time during the next day, and the Sherifs and L. hurried off there, with an escort, to meet them. P. and I and the Egyptian Camel Corps, with our little band of sick Turkish prisoners, whom we had literally succoured from the wayside, proceeded in a more leisurely fashion, stopping *en route* at about 8.30 for breakfast. Whilst we were thus halted, the German, Austrian, and Turkish prisoners, with their Arab guards, also *en route* to Deraa, passed us. A sorrowful, broken-looking throng of men, whose obvious dejection made me, little sympathy as I had for them, feel almost ashamed of the contrast between us, enjoying an excellent breakfast, served by well-disciplined, noiseless, attentive, Egyptian soldier-orderlies, and them. Such thoughts, however, did not trouble Ahmed, my Turkish prisoner-servant, who, equipped now with a Turkish rifle and other articles taken from yesterday's loot, and visibly fatter and more prosperous as a result of his ten days' "captivity," was sitting propped up against a camel-saddle, which, when off a camel on the ground, makes an admirable "back rest," smoking with evident relish one of the daily "ration" of cigarettes which I allowed him. He regarded his fellow-countrymen with obvious contempt, ignoring the remarks that one or two of them called out to him, and, pointing to the Boches, said to one of the Egyptian soldiers "Allemani" in tones of deep disgust. Ahmed, who was a real "character," was rapidly becoming a most useful servant, and would have been more useful still, but for his

complete inability to learn a single word of Arabic (none of us talked Turkish), despite the praiseworthy offorts of P.'s Egyptian soldier-servant to instruct him in that language.

After breakfast we marched on past Tafas, the scene of the fighting of the previous day. Outside the village were the naked bodies of three or four Turkish soldiers, who had been found by the Arab inhabitants hiding in some outhouses that morning, and who had been summarily executed and their bodies stripped in revenge for the murders of women and children. One could scarcely blame the Tafas villagers, but, at the same time, there was something revolting in the sight of these Turks, naked and unburied, lying where they had fallen on the Deraa road. One, a boy who looked about seventeen, was actually in his death-agony as we rode up, and died just afterwards. A few hundred yards away was a listless sorrowful group of women of the place, mourning their dead offspring, and over everything there was an air of tragedy and hopelessness. Altogether a pitiable scene.

A mile or two farther on we heard that the Arab leaders and L. were in Deraa, where they had arrived just before the G.O.C. of the British Cavalry Division, who was now there also. Just after this news reached us we came on an Indian cavalry picquet, and then on a party of British motor-cyclist orderlies, and finally on a British General and his Staff. The latter greeted P. and me with considerably less cordiality than that with which we greeted them. To us they represented the outward sign of the accomplishment of our task and our own safety. To them we represented as embarrassing a situation as ever confronted a British General. Our column was an Allied column, composed in the main of Arabs with some French; we few British officers, so far as we were under anybody's orders, were directly under Allenby's G.H.Q.; the Arab leaders were being hailed by the hundreds and indeed thousands of desert Arabs and local inhabitants who were pouring into Deraa, not only as military conquerors, but as political and national saviours; L. was looked upon as the direct representative of that far-off country whose support had assisted the freeing of Arabia, and the British General and his Staff were regarded as very incidental adjuncts to that victory. Add to this the fact that there existed such a thing as a Sykes-Picot agreement, and that there was a town which obviously *some one* was soon going to capture, called Damascus, and you have a really complicated situation, which a British divisional General without previous instructions, already exhausted by days of continual fighting and pursuit, was hardly competent to unravel.

To order our buccaneers to quit the town of Deraa would probably result in armed conflict with the now wildly excited and exultant Arabs, and cer-

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To order our buccaneers to quit the town of Deraa would probably result in armed conflict with the now wildly excited and exultant Arabs, and cer-

tainly produce complications with "authority," in view of the alliance with King Hussein, as well as the presence of French troops in the column. To allow both the British Division and our column to remain in Deraa would as surely lead to trouble, since a British Division, composed, to use an Irishism, mainly of Indian troops, would not long tolerate the presence, cheek by jowl with them, of a force who disregarded all established military etiquette: who slept and fed themselves, and watered and picketed their animals where they listed; took the food and forage they required, wherever and whenever they found it, and constantly discharged their rifles in the air as a light-hearted *feu de joie*. Moreover, the Arabs cordially dislike Indians, and have a distinct colour-prejudice against them. Indeed, in the short hour or so that the two forces were in Deraa, some Arab soldiers and an Indian cavalry picquet nearly came to armed blows, and more serious trouble was only averted by L. The latter immediately afterwards went to see the G.O.C. of the British Division, and, after considerable discussion, it was decided that the Arabs should "administer" Deraa, and that the squadron of Indian cavalry, in charge of some stores, which the Division was to leave behind when it continued its pursuit of the Turk, should bivouac outside the town.

Deraa was wholly unpleasant. Every hundred yards or so were dead Turks and bomb-craters. Sick and wounded Turks and townspeople were everywhere, and it was not for a day or two that the Arab doctors, who really worked well, managed to collect all of them and attend to their needs. The town was chock-a-block with Arabs from the surrounding districts, who galloped about the roads and paths with complete disregard of their own and every one else's necks. Food for the troops, including the British, was dangerously short, and the problem of feeding and watering the animals was very great. In these circumstances the Arabs showed both organisation and humanity in being able to feed somehow the hundreds of prisoners who were now collected in the town.

It is scarcely necessary to say that the Turks had left the town in a state of indescribable filth. Nothing, to my mind, so illustrates the progressive decay of Turkish military morale as the squalor and dirt of their captured lines in 1918, as compared with the comparative cleanliness of their trenches in Gallipoli in 1915. When I saw, too, the Turkish prisoners at Deraa, they did not appear to belong to the same nation who faced us at Helles. I suppose it will never be known the extent to which the flower of their army was killed in action, died of wounds, of sickness, or exposure, in 1915; but, contrary as my opinion may be to that of the experts, I always believe that the Palestine victories were partly won on the old

Peninsula, and by the Russian victories in the Caucasus; and I remember that day at Deraa conjuring up for a moment the well-remembered picture of the *River Clyde* and "Lancashire Landing," and thinking how much we all owed to the spirit that the immortal ship symbolised.

There was one feature of Deraa which made us all very proud: in the station was a quantity of rolling-stock and at least two engines in good order, which, but for our last demolition on the Damascus line, would have carried hundreds, if not thousands, of Turks northwards, probably eventually to join Mustapha Kemal and add to present-day difficulties in Anatolia. Other rolling-stock had been similarly imprisoned west and south of Deraa.

That alone justified the high value which many of us have set, myself for example, in a certain green-benched chamber to which I have access, on the military achievements of the Arabs; and, after all, the success of our column, however much directed by British effort, was really and truly an Arab success. No sneers by Continental editors, no deprecatory references by British military authorities—though never by Lord Allenby—many of whom cannot understand because they would be incapable themselves of directing desert warfare, to L.'s "exaggerated ideas of Arab possibilities," can alter the fact that our column helped Allenby's victory and disorganised the Turkish retreat, and in doing so put the coping-stone on several years of dogged determined effort towards the attrition of the Turkish army. J., on whom the burden and heat of the day as regards the military "advice" to the Arabs had fallen, and who is one of the finest British regular officers that I have ever met, as well as L., must have felt an especial pride and joy that day. Deraa was the coping-stone of their effort.

Whilst the British and Turkish authorities were conferring that morning, P. and I, with the sure instinct of old soldiers, had chosen the most substantial and cleanest building (it was a very relative term!) in Deraa for our lodging. Hastily surrounding it with sentries, baggage, and other impedimenta, we set a party of Egyptian soldiers to work to brush and scrub floors, passages, and walls, and soon Ahmed and P.'s servant were arranging our effects in a high, cool, whitewashed room that had apparently been a German officers' mess.

The next day was uneventful, but on the 30th L. came to tell us that he and Sherif Nasser and S. were leaving in a car for Damascus, to be followed by Prince Feisul, J., and Y. The Camel Corps and Gurkhas were to return to Palestine, and I was given the choice of going with them or accompanying L. I chose the former course, as my term of detachment from my own battalion was nearly up, and, confession of materialism

though it be, I was more anxious to get a hot bath, some fresh clothes, and a taste of civilisation than to see the glories and plunge into the politics of Damascus.

It took P. some days to collect enough rations and forage for his men, but finally we left on October 2nd, and reached Jaffa seven days later, meeting on the way with much humorous comment from various British units. Few suspected P., S. H., and me to be British officers. One motor-cyclist orderly shouted, one day near Nablus, at S. H., "Come off the road, old Isaacs"—a reference to that officer's patriarchal beard. An Indian cavalry officer tried to arrest our thirty Gurkhas, on the ground that they must be deserters because they were marching with "ragged Arabs," and, being young, was very embarrassed when we haughtily told him the truth, and stammered out, "I can't sufficiently apologise, sir, to you." Worst blow of all, a garrison battalion private soldier, a perfect "Old Bill" type, just outside Jaffa itself, who, armed with a red flag, was prepared to keep native traffic from using a certain bridge, and had waved the flag in question fiercely at me as I rode in front of the company, roared out in a most threatening voice, "You black ——, can't yer see my flag?" My dignity was outraged for the whole day, and it was not until shaved, comparatively clean, and fitted out with various needed garments "off the peg" in Jaffa, I was eating a most excellent dinner with the "great ones" at E.E.F., G.H.Q. (then at Ramleh, near Jaffa), that I regained my equanimity. Two days later I was in Cairo, and a week later on my way home on leave.

A PILGRIM OF PEACE.

BY C. E. MONTAGUE.

As the Sister went out of the ward she paused to look back, with the knob of the door in her hand.

"Boys," she said, in the voice that made babes of us all, "five minutes to get into bed." We knew that five minutes, no more and no less, it would be. The door closed behind her, the little pat noise of it putting a kind of full stop to her words.

Of thirty wounded men in the ward, twenty-two had been up for the day. We were the blest. But bliss was precarious. If we were not good, the Sister might keep us in bed in the morning. So we eagerly slipped off and folded our socks and red ties and blue tunics and slacks. The shirt did not have to come off. A shirt by day, it was a nighty by night—a good plan, I can tell you, when any delay may cost dear. In five minutes, dead, the door opened; the Sister looked down the long ward.

I lay next but one to the door; so I saw what she saw. There were twenty-nine faces duly laid on their pillows. Some seven looked dull and bed-weary. Twenty-one others —I throw myself in, for I felt like it too—looked shiny and young with the glee that you feel when the life in you has taken heart to go on with a will, after a check. A twenty-ninth face, in the bed on my right, was a model in wax, awaiting only some one final touch of rigidity and refinement. Into the thirtieth bed, at the dim far end of the ward, a vast bulk, in a white shirt less vast, flew through the air from afar with astonishing momentum and dived in fear and shame under the blankets.

The Sister took it all in. A Sergeant-Major had been lost to the world when she turned out a girl. But not one to rule men wholly by terror. She went first to the wax-faced man on my right that always lay on his back with his eyes open, scrutinising the ceiling. He turned his face a few degrees at the touch of her hand on his wrist and smiled a little. He had a great dignity then, the austere prestige of the dying, who are an esoteric patriciate, lifted above desire and fear and all quarrels.

The Sister went on to the far end of the ward where the meteoric giant had gone to earth under his blankets. His great shafts of limbs were convulsing them now, in his efforts to settle down for the night; the bed looked like a small linen bag with a large and terrified cat imprisoned in it and plunging. The plunging instantly stopped when the Sister began tucking in the disarranged elements of the bed.

"Late! A Corporal late!" In the stillness I heard her gently upbraid, while she reconstructed. Then a big bony face, like a knee, came to the bed's surface. The face looked sheepishly grateful for these so great mercies.

> "We must perish if Thy rod,
> Justly should requite us."

That was the visible feeling. No doubt Lance-Corporal Martin was vowing, within, that he would be first man in bed, from that night onward, for ever.

Her tour of inspection finished, the Sister was passing the foot of my bed, on her way to the door, when another huge frame of a man, Lance-Corporal Toomey, a rug-headed Rufus, half rose from the bed on my left—the end bed on our side of the ward.

"Sisther," he hailed her.

She looked.

"Ye'd do right, Sisther," he said, with a clarion distinctness that seemed to me purposeful, "to be firm wi' that man beyant at th' end of the room, or ye'll not have a momint of peace." He paused for a second. Somehow I thought of an angler expecting a rise. He went on, in tones of virtuous indignation. "Flyin' into his bed like a Too Emma bomb!" Another momentary pause. No rise. "Aye, or an aigle itself," he appended.

A low thundereous noise came from the far end of the ward. The first chaos of this mass of sound was just beginning to receive form in the words "Is it faultin' me that he is, the conthrary toad?" when the Sister raised a reprehensive finger.

Speech, divinest work of man, relapsed into its raw material of booming sound. This sank by degrees. Lance-Corporal Martin was still out to be good.

The Sister looked down at Toomey, reining him in. In him, too, mighty reservoirs of formless sound were straining against sluices. "Why don't you Corporals screen one another," she said, with the voice of the dove and the serpent's wisdom, "like Sergeants?"

"If anny Sergeant," Toomey impressively opened, "in all the wide worruld, had lived wi' the Martins of County Fermanagh these twinty years back, the way I've had to enjure——"

"We won't tell any tales," the Sister decided, and Toomey's conditional sentence never achieved its apodosis. "Good-night, all," the Sister said at the door. "Don't talk too long."

She gone, the ward, for a while, was all in a buzz. It is always the way at first, in night nurseries. Not for long, though. Sleep swiftly invaded one simple organism after another. Soon a few specialists only were riding their hobbies on into the night. In the bed opposite mine the ward grouser was manfully keeping it up. "Call them ole dishwashin's supper! Well, roll on, breakfus'! 'S all I 'ave to say." Three beds

away on my right—two beds beyond the moribund man—the ward braggart, like Alexander the Great at the feast, was still routing his foes. "An Austrylian 'e was, an' 'e come powkin' 'is conk in me fice, aht in Ahmenteers. 'More'n twelve thahsand mahl ah've come,' he says, 'to sive you ticks,' 'e says. 'Well,' ah says, 'you down't come a bloody inch further,' ah says, an' knocks 'im dahn. That's wot ah done. Fair on 'is boko. Knocked 'im silly, ah did. 'Struth!"

To these shrill melodies a fortifying bass was furnished by my neighbour Toomey. Cowed, but not changed in heart, by the Sister, he still rumbled on in his bed like a distant bombardment. Like Martin's last share in debate, it was mainly a deep rolling or heaving sound, not chopped up into words; in its vague impressiveness it affected my ear somewhat as a distant range of undulating hills affects the eye. But now and then a short passage of firm articulate commination lifted itself into clearness, as tiny islands of coral, emergent morsels of vast unexplored structures, stick out into daylight. "No peace an' quiet at all to be had!" "Lettin' on to be wounded, an' he leppin' the width of the worl' into his bed!" And I used to think once that soliloquies in plays were unnatural! "He an' his Bloody Han' of Ulsther! Let him put it in his pookut, th' owl' miser!" "Boundin' into his bed wid a thrajecthry on him the like of a grasshopper!"

Toomey always seemed to return to that vision of Martin's retirement for the night as if it were fuel wherewith to stoke important fires. I cannot think that Martin's jump was intrinsically offensive to Toomey. All jumping, by man or beast, is highly valued in Ireland. Was it that any salient gesture of a foe's helped to make the whole abhorred image of him more provocatively vivid? I leave it to you: I am not a psychologist, only a reporter.

"The beth'ration I've had wi' the Martins, the whole of the pack!" "If our Lady of Siven Sorras ond set eyes upon thim she'd know what it is to be vexed!" You have heard the low seismic swallowings, pantings, and gulps of a big locomotive held in leash at a station. Toomey, making a good recovery from gunshot wounds and wrestling in spirit with a friend, was rather like that—a volcano tied down with string. Then reverie fell back on the old refrain. "An' he descindin' into his bed the match for an airiplane landin'!" "The spit of some owl' hivvinly body bruk loose an' traversin' a big share of the firmimint!" The obsession of Toomey by this haunting spectacle was becoming ungovernable. He had to communicate it.

"Did y'ever see the like of ut—ever?" he said across to my bed.

"No," said I, feeling my diction somewhat jejune, where

so much picturesque figuration was going.

"'Faith, then, *I* have," said Toomey—"the time that I seen his mother's starved hens flyin' in at me own mother's door, the vulchers, fit to grab all the nourishment out of me plate, an' I a young child."

"Bit of a war on," I asked, "over there?" I wanted to sleep. I am only an Englishman. I do not hold two turbulent quarts of tireless life in the modest pint pot of my body. It seemed the shorter way to sleep—just to open the dykes and let the whole narrative flood escape and be done with, rather than lie there all night being splashed with these interjectional spurts from the dammed seething waters. "Bit of a war on?" I asked.

"Ye'd not know," he impressively said, "hwat war is till ye'd visit the County Fermanagh. Talk of this little onpleasantnuss wi' the Germans! Ooh, nothin' at all! Here wan day an', mebbe, gone in the mornin'! Th' owl' wars of Troy'd be hard set to match hwat we have in Dhromore, where the Martins are nex'-door neighbours to us, an' not respected by anny excipt black Prod'stunts the like of thimselves. To crown all, Jawn Martin beyant had no sooner grown up than nothin' ud do him but join the police. Mind, there's manny a decent lad in the force; the way ye'd pity thim on a summer night in Dhromore—we in the licensed prem'ses, all at our aise, an' they walkin' this way an' that in the street, wi' the tongues hangin' out of their mouths, till the hour 'ud come they'd be free to lep in at the door an' tell the boys they mus' shout or come out of ut. Martin beyant 'ud not give ye the choice. He'd liefer lose drink than not cause human mis'ry. A narra-spirited man an' a bigoted peeler!

"I thanked God for this tiff wi' the Germans. Ye see, in a sense, it gev Martin, boun' an' gagged, into me han'. 'Jawn,' I said—I was just after enlistin'—'Jawn, I'll be back before long. I'm on'y steppin' over to France, to destroy,' says I, 'the greatest Prod'-stunt Pow'r in Europe.'

"'I might be at him before ye,' says he, pensive like, an' that made me onaisy. Ye'll understan' I'd always taken me own part the best way I could in this chat that we had, wan day an' the next, an' yet I'd the wish in me min' to have peace an' quiet awhile, away out of Dhromore, leavin' that plague of the worl' confined where he was. An' so I'd thanked God for th' affair wi' the Germans. But now I was not aisy at all.

"'Ye wudden't sneak off,' says I, 'out of the country, an' lave all the poor German bands in the streets onprotected from pop'lar voilence—an' they niver safe in Irelan' yit since eighteen-sivinty.' If I'd have had more diplom'cy, God help me! I wudden't have said it. But I had me quarrel to mind. I've ped for it since.

"Says Jawn, 'There's a sowl of good, as they say, in annything aivil. I see be the papers

these Germans are smashin' every Romish cathaidral they'd meet on the road.' Half thinkin' it out, he seemed to be, for an' against, an' half stickin' the knife into me bow'ls. The same as meself.

"'Don't fear to spake,' says I, 'of '98, an' of all that the Hessians done for ye then.' Madness it was to say that. I was dhrivin' him into the army, that might have been a haven of rest for meself for the howl of the war, with him out of ut. Lavin' all was I, an' bafflin' meself, to have the wan dig at him.

"Jawn looked at me quarely. 'An' so ye'll fight for th' English,' he says, 'afther all? Ye're penitint, are ye?'

"However, I knew me fac's there.

"'Th' English are givin' free thransport,' says I, 'to this Wipers beyant, to see th' owl' flag hangin' up in a church that the French an' th' Irish tuk off thim in Malbury's wars. There's the fine penitince for ye,' says I.

"'Oh, ye'll see Waterloo yit, me fine touris',' says he, jus' to howld me in play, an' he puzzlin' it out what to do.

"'I may that,' says I, 'if it's annyways near Fontenoy.'

"'Dad!' says he irrel'vantly, scratchin' the back of his head in the ag'ny an' sweat of his thinkin' about somethin' else, 'haven't I got a better right not to be friends wi' the English than you, an' they jus' afther passin' Heme Rule?'

"'What way'd ye be friends,' says I in me anger an' folly, 'wid English or Irish, an' you afther lookin' away with the howl force of your eyes while th' Orangeys landed their Mausers from Hamburg, to slaughter the wan as lief as th' other?'

"We bruk away then, he to-Hellin' the reel Pope an' I doin' the like be ivry weeny black Pope in his wrinkly tin Vatioun all over Ulsther. It was a kin' of s'lute we had always, meetin' an' partin'.

"Begob, if the nex' Monday mornin' he didn' come shankin' on to parade on the wan barrick-square with meself. We were formin' B Comp'ny that day, an' th' owl' Sergeant-Major, Yorke, was expoundin': 'Sixteen men I'll have now, for Number Wan Section. Who-iver they are, they'll work together, eat together, sleep together, an' fight together, from this out to th' end of the war. So anny man wishful to be with his pal, let him look to it now, or howld his peace afther. Men off'rin' for Number Wan Section, two paces step forrud.'

"Jawn gev me wan vinegar glanst an' stept out. 'Good!' thinks I, 'the sky's clearin' wanst more. Num'er Sixteen Section's the boys for me money.' I sted where I was.

"A big man on me right was gazin' melancholy at Jawn standin' out there be himself. 'Be the grace of Gawd,' says the big man under his breath, 'he may not be lousy,' an' then he steps forrud.

"Another tall man, on me lef' flank, was a big grazier from Antrim. 'The two of thim's evenly fed,' he says

soft an' low, an' he steps forrud too.

"'Three hefty merchants,' says Yorke. 'Anny more welther weights? Come, men; th' enemy's waitin'.'

"Ye'll notus, big men herd together. The lads of six fut an' a bit began steppin' out in their pride.

"'Anny more Tiny Tims?' says Yorke, sizin' up wid his eye the ten gi'nts he'd collected be now. A good man he was, an' had his joke always. Kilt in the Railway Thriangle, east of Arras, an' the las' thing he said was, 'Get on wid ye, men! I'm makin' a separut peace.'

"Be now he had fifteen ver'table monsthers. 'Wan more Little Tich is required,' he says; 'gran' featherweight boxin' we'll have in this section.'

"Ye'll think me an ijjut. Me that had the chanst to be shut of him, for the duration, be the howl len'th of a comp'ny! I dunno. Was it the wicked conceit of me statcher? Was it the shame of me bein' left there stickin' out of the ranks like a lamp-pos' surrounded be childher? Was it that word of the boxin', an' all the good ut might bring? Dear knows. We're the quare craytures. I stept out, be some divil's guidance.

"I'll not trouble ye with a report on our trainin'. Ye've had it yerself. It was six months for all an' six years for th' onfort'nates condemned to the wan hut wi' Jawn. We came out to the trenches above be the briekstacks, opposut Quinshy, a good place in itself, wi' the makin's in it of quiet an' peace—the dug-outs more Christianable than manny; some derelio' trucks on a line pretty handy with more or less coal ye cud pinch; our Quarthermasther-Sergeant had genius—he gev us the firs' plum-duff ever et be British troops in a firin' trench. Nothin' to trouble at all, on'y Jawn's clapper tongue, ud deafen a miller, murdh'rin' the life of the home.

"Wan night he bet all. He went beyant the beyants. In the depth of the perishin' spring it was, that they have in these parts, an' a nasty thin evenin' — mist at the time an' a cowld rain, an' the moon not risin' over La Bassy till later — a night the monkeys ye'd see in a Zoo 'ud be huggin' each other to keep off the chill. An' Jawn there in the dug-out, settin' a little apart, hottin' his nose wid a short pipe ye'd be sick an' tired of seein' before ye all day, an' all th' off-jooty men round him good practical Cath'lics, an' he just gabbin' an' gabbin' on about the wil' doin's of some wickud medjeevul Pope he'd invented.

"Of corse I was settin' him right. Why wuddent I, knowin' me fac's. But not enjoyin' ut. Weary I was of ut all. I'd liefest have had the man dead, an' all the worl' tranquul.

"Near direct action we were when Shane, our platoon Sergeant then — he was kilt at

Dickybush after — kem into the homestid. 'Gawd save,' he says, 'all in this place. Two volunteers to go wirin'?'

"We had been out for a while, so there wasn't th' ugly rush that there was in the wil' early days at anny word of the kin'—every man for some sport for himself before they'd have a peace signed on him. Ev'rywan knew be now he'd be kilt in his turn, widout leppin' out of his place in the oue. Everywan knew ut except a few lads jus' come out on a draf'. I had to spake quickly be raison of them. But I'd have given me sowl for an hour's quiet that minnut, out of range of that Orangeman's endluss haranguin'. An' so I let a yell that won be a head: 'Ye promust me, Sergeant, the time that I misbehaved in the lorry.'

"The same instiant minnut Shane nodded at me, an' Martin's owl' creak of a voice kem in a good second. 'Here's wan, Sergeant,' he said. The boys from the draf' also ran. A Jock that was wan of thim had a very good argymint nearly ready why he should go. But they hadn't an owl' soljer's rapid rayaction undher a schimulus. So I stept down before thim into the pool. An' they hadn' enjured howl gen'rations of livin' nex' door to the Martins. An' now, Gawd help me! Martin was in for ut too, an' me qui-ut day in the country rooned before ut had started.

"Dad, if he hadn' been an actin' Lance-Corpril, onpaid, I'd have been in comman' of the party, me bein' th' owldest soljer be four days. Then I'd have put him through ut, be cripes. As ut was, I had on'y me tongue to come to me succour.

"'Why was ut,' said I, whin Shane had tuk lave of us, 'why was ut, Corp., that I got in before ye? Aye, in a canter.'

"'Ye're a liar,' says he, with his teejus habit of missin' the point of annythin' that a person would say. 'I was as wishful to go as yerself.'

"'Ye were that,' says I. 'Your on'y trouble was, when the time came for a good burst of speed, ye were thinkin' in English, a foreign language instinctively quare to your min', an' you a son of the Gael, however pervarted.'

"'An' how long wud ye be, your own self, ye fantastic owld antiquarium,' says Martin, 'in spittin' out even as much as "Here, Sergeant" itself, in the Gaelic? From this out till to-morra, mebbe, an' then needin' a pencil an' slate brought to ye before ye'd compose ut.'

"Very fort'nut was it that I knew me fac's. 'The mere gabbin',' says I, 'is nothin' at all. It's the thinkin' that matters. Learn your own native language that's hangin' about at the back of your min', an' think in it bowldly. There's no other way ye'll escape from this habit of sthrikin' in late in th' hour of trile—the way a hen 'ud be in an' she attemptin' to neigh or to bark it all out in her min', instead of cluckin', before

she'd quit out of the way of a cart. She'd be swif'ly run over.'

"He didn't answer me then.

"At elivin we p'raded for ordhers, relatin' to th' innemy's wire. The Captain himself—he was kilt at High Wood—was out an' about in the trench whin we quitted for Germ'ny. Be that we knew we'd be safe from behin'. The *m'ral* of the men was that high they'd be loosin' off all night at anny owl' olod they'd percaive, in the hope it might be a good action. As for annythin' movin', Gawd help ut! An' so we were glad. If annythin' human oud hol' back our sentries from makin' good groups on our sterns, Shane an' the Cap. were the men.

"Th' innemy's wire was siventy paces away, an', as you know, siventy paces route-march on your belly, the way of the snake in the garden, is no good to annywan, ever. An' we went about an' about. An' not a good mot'rin' road. An' Martin niver stopped but wanst to take breath. Mebbe ye've observed, when takin' a walk with a friend, there are men that go faster an' faster the more they're intint, in their secrut insides, on inventin' the divil's own repartees, all ready to fire, an' whin they're gettin' on gran'ly within, forgin' all the munitions they'd want, they're fit to gallop itself. Jawn was wan of the breed.

"Th' on'y time he tuk iver a pull, he turned on me sudden an' ven'mus.

"'Ye an' yer preestoric owl' Gaelic!' he whispers. 'A match for th' owl' women that won't use a ha'porth of linen that's med with anny machine that was new since the Flood!'

"'For a man,' says I, 'tryin' to marshal his thoughts in an outlandish tongue, ye've not dawdled at all,' says I, 'in devisin' that smashin' retort. Very barely four hours.'

"'An' why stop at the Gaelic?' he says, pantin'. 'Why not go back to the reel startin' gate while ye're at ut, an' think in Persian or Greek or some owld yappin' noise your forefawthers med, an' they monkeys leppin' about in the trees?'

"I was beginnin' at 'Hwat are the fac's?' when Martin adjourned th' altercayshn be boltin' again. It had done no good to our tempers. To Martin's at all evense. Well he knew I'd have put ut across him on that new quistion he'd raised, before settin' off, about sci'nce an' religion. So nothin' would do him but plunge on ahead — I'll engage he was sharp'nin already the nex' dart he'd plant in me vitals—an' not mind at all where he went till he'd slung himself hid over heels into wan of th' owld flooded beg-howls left be the shells. It was cammiflaged well, I'll admit, be the grass an' weeds growin' out long from th' edges.

"I med sure th' inn'my wud hear. How wuddent he hear a rhinoc'rus, the like of that, ent'rin' his bath? An', the nex' thing, I knew ut. Aye, be dint of a weeny clickin' noise from his trench. It's the cock of a Very pistol, thinks I, an' the light's comin' on—that

or some godluss breed of an Emma G that they have, an' it bein' called to attention before it'd start the good work. An' be now the mist was liftin' like smoke, an' a clean half moon was dhrawin' itself away up the sky, informin' upon us.

"Jawn's head was stickin' out of the deep. I'll engage he was cowld. But his body was sheltered from solluds at anny rate, under th' eastern wall of the howl, an' he cud submerge for short inthervals, too, if th' inn'my shud menace his piriscope. I was the victim, out in the wide worl'. An' Jawn saw ut. 'Flatten yourself,' he whispers, over the face of the wathers. 'Flatter, be far, for the love of Gawd. Rowl yourself out into pastry before they put the light on ye.'

"Begob, I'd been flat as a plaice from that diabolue click onward. Breadth had I been from that out; no thicknuss at all. I hadn' stopped to tilliphone to the Corps. An' when I was plast'rin the groun' the like of a poultus, I found a howl the size of a thimble an' put me nose in ut.

"Then kem the trouble. Th' inn'my was damnin' expinse. Pourin' out money. Three, four, five Very lights at wan instiant. Wan great baste of an arc light of a moon that ud illum'nate half Waterloo Station went on leiterin' over me head; I'd enjured a twelvemonth, be what I cud judge, of invijjus public'ty before ut went out. An' me there thinkin' slowly an' caref'lly, the way ye'll remimber ye do at these crit'cul momints. Thinkin' of all the blisth'rin' force of the chat I'd be givin' to Martin after lights-out. I that had come to that remote place for a season of quiet, away from the janglin' an' strafes of the worl'.

"In due course the fireworks ixpired. It was amazin'—the bats hadn't seen me at all. I'll own that the firs' thing I done with me new start in life was to spend a few seconds in grinnin' an' shiv'rin' with chuckles, alone with meself in the kin', friendly dark, the way I'd not done since the time that I was a boy an' succissfully hid in the loft from me fawther.

"Me nex' thought was of others. Jawn had crep' forth from the bed of the howl an' lay on the shelvin' fore-shore like a newt.

"'Shall we shank on wid us, Corpril?' I whispered. 'Or have ye come out,' I added, 'to this rugged spot to enjoy adult baptism on'y?' I knew me fac's, an' the pistilint scot of the man.

"'The game is quared on us,' he mutters discontintedly—more to himself than to anny-wan.

"'It's devilloped,' says I, 'be what I can see, into ruthless subm'rine warfare.'

"'Mebbe I'd do right,' says he, 'to go back for fresh ordhers. Th' innimy 'll watch an' pray from this out.'

"'Aye will he,' says I—'the prayer of all sentries on earth—to rest onmolested, thim an' their wire, to th' end of their

watch. An' shall we,' says I, 'grant their request? Isn't it carryin' gratichude altegether too far, for the Reformaysh'n itself, an' the lunch that the Kaiser gev Carson?' I'd have said more, but ye know the neciss'ty of keepin' concise in the field.

"Begob, in the moon comin' up I cud see the whites of his eyes very quare-shaped an' vishus at that, the like of a horse that'd offer to bite ye. 'Carry on workin',' he says, an' he was off on the top gear again, lettin' her rip for th' inn'my's wire, the way I was out of me breath, beltin' after him on me intestines, before he let up all of a suddent. An' then I saw why.

"He'd his head liftud up from the groun' an' pressed back same as 'Heads backward—bend' at phys'cul drill, on'y frozen. Starin' rijjud he was, to his front—ye cud tell be the back of his neck, an' it dark night, how he had the eyes bulgin' out of him, starin' at somethin'. Then I saw ut too.

"It was a man, lyin' full on his belly, the like of ourselves. He was facin' at us, an' he had his head a weeny shade lower than Martin's—a better posish'n. Crouchin' outside th' innimy's wire he was, ten feet away from us.

"Wan thing I knew. Jawn 'ud do right. A quar'lsome man an' a bigot, an' yet a good soljer, the way he'd do best the time all before him'd be goin' its worst. He'd earned his stripe well. Put him in anny owld sort of a fix, without notus—he'd do right, the like of a cat knockin' into a dog an' she walkin' about in her sleep—she'd have th' eyes of him out before lettin' a yawn, an' Jawn was her aquil.

"There was clouds now sthravadin' over the moon, so I cudden't see all. But me heart tol' me Jawn was sof'ly exthractin' a bomb from his right tunic-pocket, an' pickin' the pin of it out, an' howldin' it ready to throw. An' so I conformed to his movemints.

"He didn' throw yet. An' then he set off crawlin' precawshusly on too'rds the man, an' the man keepin' still, the two of thim there like a dog reconnoithrin' a strange dog, an' movin' gradjul an' stiff an' collected for action. Jawn crep' an' he crep' till he'd crep' right up to the man, an' then he put out a han' an' felt the face of the man, an' the man didn' mind ut at all. An' then Jawn signalled me on.

"Ye'll have guessed how ut was. Fritz had been dead a great while. He'll have gone on some irrand or other, the same as ourselves. There'd bin no battle there, at the time, an' dead men in the open not plintiful yet.

"I got me head levil to Jawn's. Gran' cover we had, behin' the dead German. 'How soon did ye know?' I whispered.

"'Know hwat?' says he sourly.

"'That Fritz,' says I, 'had gone west?'

"'From the moment,' says

he, 'that he kem in me presence.'

"'How'd ye see ut?' says I.

"'I didn',' says he. 'I smelt ut. The man was a Papis'. Wuddn' I know a dead Papis' at ten feet away in the good scentin' weather we're havin'?'

"Thinks I, 'Ye can score yourself wan, me fine lad, but the night isn't over.' I left ut at that for the momint. 'An' so,' says I, 'the pin is not out of your bomb?'

"'It is not,' says he. 'Why'd I stir ut at all, an' it apt not to go back to jooty when wanst demob'lised, an' have me there howldin' a mad trigger down for the rest of th' excursion?'

"'Ye're lucky,' says I. 'Me own pin's out an' lost on me howlly, beyant in the grass.'

"'Han' me over the bomb,' says Martin.

"I may have hizzitated a second.

"'Han' ut across,' he repayted. 'We're not howldin' the firs' session after Howm Rule.'

"I handed it over. Sthrainin' it seemed to be, under me han', to be off an' at work in its station in life.

"'I'll give ut a home,' he says, 'now, an' a chanst in life after.'

"How Jawn kep' ut still in his pockut I'll not conjicture—whether he med a new pin of the wire he'd always have in his pockut for snarin' a hare, or tuk out the detonathor itself, or hwat all. Annyway we went on wid our own work, an' a long hour it tuk, th' innimy not bein' aisy about it at all. Constantly sendin' up flares an' bringin' about unimployment. We'd have had little done if the Cap. hadn't worked the lights for us the gran' way he did, makin' it black where we were, be the force of conthrast. We saw his han' in it an' thanked Hivvin for a good off'cer.

"At las' we were through with our job on the wire, an' then we assimbled behin' a good sizable mole-hill. We tuk the bearin's of home. Then Martin, that hadn't seemed to be troubled till then, says low in me ear, 'A nice way I'm in with this engine of death that ye gev me rampin' roun' in me pockut.'

"Says I, 'Apt we'll both of us be to be kilt be a primmature burst before we'd see home.'

"'We'd do right,' says he, 'to be quit of ut early.'

"'Aye, an' wan or two more,' says I, 'be way of support. It's not twinty paces,' I says, 'to the innimy's trench.'

"'An aisy throw,' he says, 'an' we'd be protectin' ourselves.'

"'Aye, an' wearin' down also,' says I, 'the innimy's man-pow'r.'

"'They're affordin' the bes' mark,' he says, 'that we've had in the war. They're as thick in that trench as a p'litical meetin'. Lay your ear to the groun' and——'

"'Have I ivver laid ut annywhere else,' says I, 'durin' the howl of the outin'?'

"He had an offensive way

of goin' on from the las' word he'd said, f'r all the worl' as though you'd not spoken at all—'Ye'll hear,' he says, 'the deep hummin' sound of scores of guthral voices.'

"I was incinsed be that trick that he had of scornin' me little irrel'vance.

"'Guthral indeed!' says I. 'Worse than the English, be-dad! A good slam of the Gaelic I'll want, to clean me ears after ut.'

"'Are ye faultin' th' English again,' says he, 'an' you helpin' thim now?'

"'Aye, to come to their senses!' says I. 'They that set up the Proeshans in life, at th' expinse of the Frinch, when the Honezolluns hadn't the strenth of the Great Joyces in Galway. They that went to the Germans for fiddlers an' waiters an' kings, an' a cap for their troops, an' a new religion itself, an' whatever they'd want. An' why not at all, an' they all cousins an' Chewtons together?'

"'Aye, an' fightin' like cousins,' says he. 'Kape yer head down,' he says. But he didn' say 'Kape your mouth shut.' A quar'lsome man, wil' to be at an argyment always. An' there we lay, he on his right cheek an' me on me left, nuzzlin' the wet groun' while I towld him the fac's, subjocin' me voice because of th' inn'my. The two front lines were sendin' up lights all along, an' they intersiotin' wan another above us, the way we seemed to be lyin' out on the floor of a church with a great arch over our heads an' the lines of ut all drawn be the tracks of the lights.

"'I give th' English all criddit,' says I, 'for comin' at lenth to thimselves, the same as Friday, the black, that turned friendly at last an' assisted the traveller, Robinson Crusoe, against the man-aitin' scuts that he had in his fam'ly.'

"'Downright fawnin' ye are on th' Englishry now,' says Martin. 'Ye'd do right to get a good Blighty, the first wan that offers, an' off with ye home, an' preach your new Gospil to haythens like Casemint.'

"'Such bein's are more than half English,' says I, 'be descent, or they'd see the gran' laugh we have now at th' English, an' they comin' roun' at last to detist all that's German as much as ourselves. Begob but th' English are entered now to the vermin they had for their cousins, an', plaze Gawd! they'll nivver return to their vommut.'

"I cud have gone on a great while, bein' up in me fac's, but ye'll understand I was speakin' in that place under some disadvantij. Still, I'd got me word in, an' I felt aisier after. But, if ye'll believe me, he wasn't convinced, not a tittle. He tuk out the bomb from his pockut. 'Before ye have me distroyed,' he says, 'be screechin' an' hullabalooin' across to your fellow-inn'mies of Englan', we'll bring an event into those quiet lives.'

"Wishful I was for ut too, after the teejum we'd had, an'

yet fritened to think of Shane an' the Cap., that had ordered us not to dhraw fire. 'Have we author'ty for ut?' says I.

"'God help ye! Author'ty!' says he. 'If ye hadn't turned the Reformaysh'n away from the door ye'd have some indivijjle judgmen' to-day an' a modhern soljer's inish'tive in an immergency.'

"'Reformaysh'n be damned!' says I. 'We'll have the Cap. up on his hin' legs, tellin' us off for self-actin' mules.'

"'Ye're a chile of author'ty,' says he. 'So strike out for the comfor's of home, the while I'll be leavin' me card, an' then after you.'

"It was an ordher. I set out an' squirmed a good four paces westward. Then I thought hadn't I got a good right to disobey Jawn, an' he disobeyin' a comp'ny commander? So I checked in me course an' tuk the pin out of the second bomb that I had, an' lay on me back, with me feet to the foe an' me head illivated, to see what Jawn 'ud be at. Black agin the full shine of the moon, I saw his arrum, an' it swingin' back for the throw. Thin I loosed me own trigger an' held on for two seconds good, to mek sure of a burst before Fritz 'ud return the ball to the bowler.

"Jawn was a natty bomber, no quistion. His cracker had burst fair in th' inn'my's trench be the time I sent mine speedin' after its collaigue. The cries that there were in that trench! An' then Martin kem west, wrigglin' headlong, the back of him ripplin' the like of a caterpillar tryin' to gallop.

"'Canter,' says he, 'canter along on your bowils.' There was a great seren'ty, for wanst, in his voice. An' I was the same way meself—at peace with mankin'. Ye know how ye are, after prosp'rin', at hom'cide. 'Canter,' says he, almost civ'lly. I cantered. An' reason enough. The howl concern was lookin' apt to diginnerate into a war of attrishn. Fritz was dead tired of havin' the night that he's had. Dead set agin anny more secrut diplom'cy. The hivvins above an' th' earth beneath, he illuminated thim all. 'Twas as though he'd tuk Paris. If he'd have done ut in London he'd have been fined.

"All the way Martin behin' me was gruntin' out steerin' diriotions. 'Half-right,' he'd nivver done sayin', 'ye owld Maryolath'r—anny patch of dead groun' in this wiekud worl' is half-right.' Or 'Gallop,' he'd say, an' we close on our wire, 'nivver mind yer owld vitals. Gallop before they put the lanthern on our postheriors.'

"Then it kem on us. Aye, like the judgmint of Gawd fallin' down. There was but the wan lane through the wire, an' straight an' narrow the way, an' that fi'ry sword flamin' down on the gate. No use shammin' dead like the beetles ye'd bring to the light wid your spade. We'd ha' been filled as full of howls as a net. Fritz had got the addriss, an' already the stuff was not bein' far misdelivered.

"I lep in at th' op'nin' an' on toords the par'put. 'Rowl yerself over ut! Bowl yerself

over ut, anny owld way,' yells Martin behin' me, an' then I knew he was hit, be the traces of voilent effort there were in the voice of him.

"Now I'll engage ye'll think me a fool. I that had got, be the act of Gawd an' the King's inn'mies, a chanst to be shut of him howlly, for ever, relievin' th' entire platoon of the curse of Hivvin that Martin was nivver done callin' down be his godlussnuss on us all. A man's a quare thing. I'm tol' be a firs'-class dentist beyant at Dromore, if a tooth hasn' got a tooth the match of itself for to bite on, its apt to grow weaker an' weaker, an' fall out evensh'ly. Mebbe it's like that. An' Jawn was as bad. 'Off wid ye to hell!' he says, houndin' me on into safety, th' instiant I halted. Mebbe it was just me resintment at him givin' orders an' curses an' biznuss as usu'l wid all the pride of a Corp'ril ixpirin' on jooty. 'Be damned,' thinks I, 'if ye're goin' to stay out there actin' hayroes an' martyrs all night,' an' I wint back an' gev him a fireman's lift an' away with me lovely burden. He was the weight o' the worl'. Be cripes, it's a good horse wins the Gran' Nashnal.

"All the dammij I felt on the road was a sting in me unemployed arm. Then I tuk wan flyin' lep, the like of his own way of goin' to bed, an' the two of us landed, in wan knot of arms an' legs, into the trench, alightin' first on the firin' step an' then in th' owl' stable-washin's of water there was in the fairway below, an' savin' the life of an inexpairienced sentry be knockin' him down off the step an' out of the way of the muck that was flippin' ivverywhere into the parodus, quiet an' vishus.

"'Glory,' says I, as we rowled in the syooij together, 'be to the Saints!'

"'The Saints!' says he, scornful.

"The Cap. saw us before we went down the C.T. on two stretchers. He said we done right. 'But why all the bombin?' he says.

"'We found wan of our bombs, sorr,' says Jawn, 'in a dang'rus condition.'

"'Yes?' says the Cap. 'An' the other?'

"'Mebbe, sorr,' says Jawn, pensive-like, ''twas a kin' of infection.'

"'Hum,' says the Cap. 'I feared you'd be re-unitin' the Churches.' A good off'cer. He knew all about the two of us. Knew every man's trade in the comp'ny, an' married or single, an' how manny in family.

"'Gawd forbid ut!' the two of us said in a breath. An' that ended the talk."

"And what brought the two of you here?" I sleepily asked.

"I was brought," Toomey said, "be a bullet woun' in the liver, an' he be an insincere action, a match for me own."

I guessed. "Oh, he got back on you then? He gave *you* a lift in, later on, out of the rain?"

"Aye. Onrequested. Wait an' I'll tell ye."

No doubt the story would

have been good. But I am only English. I am given life on terms. I have to take sore labour's bath now and again.

"We'll go on to-morrow," I said. "A bit of shut-eye for me now."

"Ye'll do right," he said. "Good-night, an' the blessin' of Gawd be wid ye an' stay wid ye."

I turned over on to my right side, and snuggled in for my sleep. The only thing I could see was the horizontal profile in the next bed. Wasted, etherealised, abstract, the man who had finished joy and moan had now all but attained the remote and awful repose of a marble effigy on a tomb in a Florentine church, seen by one who lies, like itself, on the floor. The only thing to be heard was a faint tap on a window above him, the delicate whipping of some loose end of a climbing rose-tree on the glass. And then, sudden, eruptive, winged with intention and gusto, there came from afar the rush of a huge bass stage-whisper: "Are ye wakin', Toomey?"

Deep called unto deep. "Is that Corp'ril Martin, mekkin' night hijjus, disturbin' the ward?"

"It is—an' Good-night to ye now, an' to hell wi' the Pope."

"An' the divil take William the Second an' William the Third, an' High Dutch an' Low, and every Martin that's in ut, from Luther out, blasphemin' the howl of the day an' then late into bed, kickin' the stars of Gawd wi' the back of your heels. So go now to your rest."

My own eyes were set on the fugitive fineness of that moribund face. It just moved, turning ever so little to right and to left as the gusts of contention blew over it. Then it settled again, the eyes always fixed on the ceiling. I thought of a water-weed on a deep pond, fluctuating minutely when gales race overhead, but soon dead-still again at its moorings.

But now the gale was abating. At each end of the ward a sequence of snorts of disdain was passing into a dying fall. Through a murmurous grumble it sank into the silent breathing of healthy infants asleep. Thus does high-handed nature interfere with the efforts of man to seek peace and ensue it.

HOW WE STOLE LIMAN VON SANDERS' CAR.

BY FRANCIS YEATS BROWN.

WE were prisoners of war in Turkey. For six months and more my friend and I had been intriguing to get out of Constantinople. We had escaped and been recaptured, and escaped again. At the time of which this story deals (November 1918) we were something of an institution for conspirators in the city. The police had our photographs when we first got away from Psamatia Camp, and the Press its paragraphs when we were caught again, in disguise. When finally we vanished from the Military Prison in Stamboul we were the talk of the bazaars, and we were credited with all sorts of things we had never done, as well as some that we had. We had therefore a certain *cachet* in the city. We knew all the scoundrels in the place, and some of the respectable people. And our house—a large comfortable house, provided by a very good friend of ours—had become a centre of intrigue in Constantinople at a time when the Turk, and Greek, and Jew, and Armenian were wondering which of them would get their throats cut, and which would do the cutting, when the Dardanelles were opened.

Some days after the Turkish Armistice was signed, but before the Allied fleet arrived, we learnt that a certain department of the British Army was hampered by an insufficiency of transport and petrol, and that it would be practically immobile on arrival in Constantinople unless a good car was obtained. Was it possible, we were asked, to remedy this by buying in the local markets? We made some inquiries among our wide and polyglot acquaintance, and found it was quite possible. The first requisite for this department was a fast and powerful car. We were given a free hand as to how to procure it, and a bag of gold to assist us in our efforts. We determined to buy the car that night. Later, we also bought petrol for it.

The parties to the transaction were M'Tavish, the Profiteer, Francesco, Rudolph, a performing bear, and ourselves.

I include M'Tavish among these personalities, because I simply cannot imagine our *ménage* in Constantinople without him. He was a prisoner of war like ourselves. A day before the Armistice we had seen him in the streets, homeless and penniless, and we had taken him back with us to become our butler. Never was there a more Admirable Crichton. He always did the right thing in the right way, and always kept on the side of the angels, so to speak, without allowing

them to assume any undue familiarity. At the crack of doom I am sure he will still be the same as ever, smart and cool and very respectful.

During the first three days M'Tavish was with us, he proved a godsend in dealing with visitors. He soon learned to keep the nationalities of our callers unmixed; to usher into the library the grave and reverend signor with details of Armenian atrocities while the Turkish politician was offered cigarettes in the drawing-room, the young Greek temporarily hidden in my bedroom, and the scallywag with Persian long dogs to sell entertained in the kitchen. We should have been lost without him, for he also did our cooking. (Incidentally, we rarely had time for meals!) He had not been with us a day before he had made friends with the local Turkish police, so that in the early morning he was to be seen going out with a big pannier under his arm, accompanied by the minions of the law to help him in his marketing. By sheer personality he had changed his whilom captors into zealous *ciceroni*. One of the bull-dog breed.

As to the bear, he lived in our back garden, and his mistress was a girl in a travelling circus, who came to feed him twice a day. He was quite devoted to her, and it was a touching sight to see him whimpering and licking her boots when they met in the morning. In her presence his ferocious expression melted to a look of ineffable tenderness. It was she who introduced him to me. Without her help I doubt if we should have become friends, for he hated strangers, and invariably sprang at them with a roar, almost throttling himself at the limit of his chain in his efforts to get at them. But once he understood that we were the sort of people he ought to know, he became quite communicative. In fact, he roared lustily whenever he saw us, until pacified with plum jam. Personally, my attentions were confined to offering him delicacies with distant respect at the end of a walking-stick. I never came nearer, because, in spite of his affectionate demeanour, his long forearms and long claws inspired me with distrust, and reminded me of the old Pathan story of Prince Charming and the Faithful Bear, who killed his master by mistake.

Of the trio who actually obtained the car for us—or stole it, to call a spade a spade—I need only say that the Profiteer—like all successful bandits—had a good deal of personal charm. He liked good company, liqueurs, and funny stories. His word was as good as his bond—in fact it had to be, because his transactions could not be written down. A gang of spies were at his beck—cringing youths who used to slink up to him in the restaurants with reports of how the sugar swindle was going at Sirkedji, or whether there were any oil barges in the Bosphorus which could be

wangled into his depot for stolen goods. He was never without a wad of bank notes, and dispensed largesse liberally to his henchmen, of whom Francesco was the chief. This Francesco was a curious hybrid creature, with no saving grace except the gift of tongues. No country owned him, and no one could have ever loved him. There seemed no light of humanity in his bleary eyes. Nothing but the sight of gold could kindle them. During the war he had been working for the Austrians, and had acquired an Austrian soldier's uniform, which helped him in his enterprises. He it was who, in consultation with the Profiteer, put us in touch with Rudolph.

Rudolph was quite an important personage in the under-world, and his services would not have been enlisted had we not laid stress on the value of speed in procuring the car.

"If you like to wait, I can get you an automobile for a ten-pound note as a personal friend," the Profiteer had said.

But we had declined this offer with an inward shudder. We wanted the machine at once, or not at all. So Rudolph was sent for. His fees would be heavy, for he was the leading consultant in the city for affairs of this nature. But he would "deliver the goods." He was a German sergeant.

We awaited his arrival with some curiosity, and I was not disappointed, for he was an interesting and perhaps an uncommon type of villain. He was a "good-looker," tall, blond, gentle-spoken, with a dreamy gaze that belied his cold and calculating brain. The things he had done were incredible, and of course unprintable. However, his morals were none of our business. According to his philosophy, each man was for himself in those days of "Deutschland unter Alles," and Rudolph didn't wait for the devil to help him, but helped himself liberally and secretly to anything he could lay his well-manicured hands on. By day he dressed in German uniform, and nosed out all stealable stores. By night, in civilian clothes, he grinned like a dog and ran about the city, selling himself and his ill-gotten knowledge to the highest bidder. . . . A sinister creature.

The plot was hatched in a café at Galata, over a bottle of *Kirsch*. We talked in French. Various possibilities were discussed, and various impossibilities, such as hospital limousines and motor-lorries, but we refused to be drawn into details. If a decent car was brought to our door that night, we would pay from £50 to £200 for it, in British gold, immediately. As an earnest of our intentions, I produced a bag of sovereigns, and letting a jingle of gold slip through my fingers, I felt that I was weaving one of the most resistless spells in all the world. That bag held stuff for crimes

and treasons untold. A motor-car was child's play for its latent power. I pushed across a sovereign each to Francesco and to Rudolph. The Profiteer was too big a man to tip. In fact, we let him pay for the *Kirsch*. Nothing definite was decided when we left to attend to other matters, but our tigers had tasted blood—in other words, they had seen our sovereigns—and we felt sure that they would return for more. It was not until ten o'clock that night that we got back to our house. Various callers had come, and had been dealt with tactfully and firmly by M'Tavish. An Armenian priest had left a budget of atrocities, terror piled on terror. Another Armenian had presented us with a translation of a Turkish article, and the names of the journalists who were engaged during the war in advocating severities against our prisoners. A boxer friend of mine had called. But one visitor, unknown to M'Tavish, and mistrusted by him, had wanted to wait our return, and was dissuaded with difficulty, for he was in a high state of excitement. A gentleman with watery eyes. Francesco. Undoubtedly Francesco. He was to come again at ten o'clock, and he was already late.

The half-hour struck, and there was still no sign of him. We sent M'Tavish to bed.

Constantinople lay under a thunderstorm that night. The air was stagnant. The city was still. It was a lull before the climax, in the affairs of nature as in the affairs of men. The fierce factions and the plots that had been brewing were soon to be aborted or succeed. The present state of things could not continue. Talaat, Enver, and Djemal had just escaped, and more malefactors would probably escape that night, before retribution overtook them. Yet the day of reckoning was close—close as the clouds that blanketed the city. And the muffled drums of cloudland were symbols of the pulse of fear that beat in the streets below, where men whispered together.

We waited patiently, discussing the chances of Francesco's return. And if he came, would it be only to talk and talk? Or would he bring the car?

The front-door bell rang. I unbarred the door. Out of the darkness a voice declared—

"I have come!"

"Why don't you come in?"

"Are you alone?"

"Of course we are. No one but ourselves."

"What's the matter with you, Francesco?" I asked, when he had crept into the hall like a whipped bitch: "is there anything wrong?"

He mopped his forehead and watched me bar the door again before replying.

"I was being followed."

We took him to the safety of the study, gave him two fingers of ration rum, and waited for his story.

"Rudolph has stolen General

Liman von Sanders' car," he said.

We were not vastly impressed.

"Where is it?" asked my friend sceptically.

"How much do you want for it?" I added.

"It's close by, with the engine running, so that Rudolph won't get caught. You can have it for a thousand pounds."

"Fiddlesticks," said my friend, or words to that effect.

"It might be worth fifty pounds," I said, "if you bring it here for us to see."

"We could sell it for a thousand on the market any day," said Francesco.

"Then sell it on the market," I said: "there is no good bringing it here if you want that price."

"But—we don't know where to put it for the night. You see, I was followed. I daren't——"

A thunder-clap made Francesco jump, and we saw that his nerve was really shaken. After we had given him some more rum, he told his story.

They had heard that afternoon, he said, that the German Commander-in-Chief's chauffeur had bolted from the Headquarters Park, leaving his cars unattended. Of course there were other chauffeurs on duty, but Rudolph, who knew the sergeant in charge, said it would be quite feasible to go into the park, start up the car, and trust to luck, and darkness and disorder at the camp, to get clear away. Each vehicle that went out had to be registered in a journal by the gate-keeper, who entered the time it went out and the time it came back, but beyond this formality there would be few questions asked. Francesco was to wait outside, to show Rudolph the way to our house.

Matters marched according to plan. Francesco waited by Taxim Gardens, and presently Rudolph appeared with no lights burning (for he had not had time to adjust the acetylene) at the wheel of a superlative Mercedes. He had had no difficulty at all. In fact, at the park he had found a Greek civilian who was trying to bribe one of the attendants to let him steal a car. Rudolph, who was in uniform, affected to be highly indignant, and "touched" this Greek for five pounds. Then he went straight to the General's cars, and choosing the fifty-sixty Mercedes, with open touring-body, he started it up. A mechanic asked him where he was going, and Rudolph replied by asking the mechanic what business it was of his? He could ask the Untereffizier in charge, if he wanted to know. At the entrance the Unteroffizier (Rudolph's friend aforesaid) remarked that it seemed likely to be a dirty night. Nothing more. No question as to where he was going. To avoid difficulties, however, and leave the ground open for future business Rudolph proposed to return next day to forge an entry in the gate-keeper's book, to show that the car had been duly returned. So far so very good. They had

the car and Rudolph had five pounds.

But the unexpected happened, as the unexpected will. In the Grand Rue de Pera they were stopped by a German patrol who asked why their headlights were not burning. Rudolph was starting to explain, when—as I gathered the story—Francesco got frightened and bolted. He didn't admit, of course, that he had acted the craven, but we inferred as much. The Germans, he said, had started asking awkward questions—who he was—why he was travelling in the General's car—where were his papers? But somehow or other, with some unexplained and unimagined lie, Rudolph had got away and passed Francesco farther down the street. He was now hiding in a by-way. Francesco could easily find him, but where was the car to be brought? Had we a garage for it?

"We are not going to be mixed up in all this business," I said; "we want a motor-car, and are willing to pay you for it. Where it came from is not our business: where we put it is not yours. All you have to do is to deliver it: we'll look after the rest."

"But I daren't go out into the street. The German police are shadowing me."

"You can go by the back way," we suggested.

This seemed an excellent idea to Francesco, and we gave him some more rum.

"We'll bring the car to your back door," he said.

"Considering everything," he continued, glancing out of the window—"considering the time of night and the weather, and—and the policy of small profits and quick returns, I'll take three hundred pounds in gold, not a penny less."

My accomplice looked at me through the bottom of his glass, and we understood each other.

"Go and get the car," he said, "and then we can talk about the price."

"Leave her at our back door," I echoed, "and your fortune's made."

Francesco stumbled out into the hall while I struck matches to light his way. We went through the dining-room and down the steps into the flooded garden. Meanwhile, unseen by us through the rain and unheard by us owing to the sloshing from the eaves, my partner was feeding marmalade to the bear to keep him quiet.

Unbarring the heavy beams from the garden door, I sent Francesco out into the night, as Noah sent the dove. Then we returned and dried ourselves and discussed the situation. What would Francesco do, slinking about in this welter of the elements? Would he find the Mercedes? And if it was found and brought to us, how much would it be worth? On a night like this would it be possible to judge, even roughly, of its condition?

I went upstairs to get a coat, and looked out of the window. The wind had come,

the torrent had changed to a driving drizzle; clouds were breaking, and their wrack was flying past the infrequent stars. The moonlight broke through the storm at times and lit the roof-tops across the Golden Horn. Soon it would be fine.

We took it in turns to stay in the garden against the return of the motor wanglers.

It was half-past one when I began my watch. The rain had stopped, but my leaky boots squelched in mud and puddles, and I confess I was rather pessimistic and tired of the whole dem'd damp conspiracy. Francesco was not of the stuff of which criminals are made. Our night was wasted. He would not return. . . . Then lo! the noise of an engine came to my ears—a fat contented hum. And round the corner of the cobbled street a car came creeping.

I called my partner, and he was instantly at my side. We opened the other half of the gate.

There stood the Mercedes, with Rudolph at the wheel and Francesco beside him. Once inside the garden and the car was ours!

"Back her in here," we whispered, lighting up the posterns with an electric torch.

It was a narrow and difficult entrance, for, not a chassis length inside the garden, there was a small pond, which had to be circumvented by running the car forward again and then backing on the opposite lock. The car was to be put on one side of the pond; the bear was tethered near the other side.

During the manœuvring of the Mercedes, the bear merely mumbled and scratched his head. With the circus he had no doubt become accustomed to nocturnal traffic. But when finally the car was inside the garden, he began to get restless and inquisitive. Perhaps our whispering got on his nerves (I don't know why we whispered, but we did), or perhaps the contagion of excitement, which is readily communicable from men to animals, made him feel it was necessary to offer his help. He began to squeak and yowl and hug himself. I could just see him, about three yards away, like a gigantic dormouse, and threw him a biscuit to prevent him "butting in."

But it was too late. The conspirators had already seen him. Francesco made for the door, but my partner was there before him and barred it. Rudolph ran round to the far side of the car and fumbled with his holster.

"Don't be alarmed; it's only a pet of ours," I said.

My friend flashed his torch in the direction of the pet, who was yammering to himself with lowered snout, searching for my biscuit and sweeping the mud with his hairy forearms. The light made him blink and look up. There was something strange about his audience, he perceived—something critical and unfriendly. After a second's silence he reared up to the

height of a man, made an apoplectic gesture as if trying to unbutton his collar, and then sprang towards the car with a roar. . . . It was a fine circus stunt, straight in the limelight of my friend's torch, and no artifice could have increased its unrehearsed effect.

"We had better get into the house," I said hurriedly.

"He'll tear the car to bits," said Rudolph, following me very briskly, however, up the garden steps.

As to Francesco, he was dumb. Verbally he could hold his own with most men, but a physical threat left him paralytic.

"Don't worry about the car," we said when we were in the cosy library again. "The bear can be trusted to look after our property. But seeing you two indistinctly in the darkness, he must have mistaken you for thieves."

The decanter of rum was put into circulation to restore the equipoise necessary to business. After lighting cigarettes, and some general conversation, Francesco and Rudolph began a heated argument between themselves.

"But which of you gentlemen is selling the car?" I asked.

"I am," said Francesco. "It was agreed that I was to take the money. Thirty-three per cent goes——"

"I am going to take the money," interrupted Rudolph. "I took the car, and I'm going to take the money. You will be paid your commission," he added to Francesco.

"How do you know we are going to buy it?" my partner asked.

"You said you would," said Francesco.

"So we will, if it is in fit condition," he replied; "but we must have a look at her before we make you an offer."

"It is the best car in Turkey at the present time," said Rudolph.

"That may be," I said, "but we are not going to buy a pig in a poke. Besides, you must agree between yourselves how much you want."

"A thousand pounds——" began Rudolph.

"Eight hundred from friends," suggested Francesco.

"And how much from enemies?" I could not help asking.

But the conspirators were obviously in an amenable mood, so we furnished them with English cigarettes and rum and black beer, and suggested that they should thrash out between them the lowest figure they would take.

Gathering together a few papers which were unsuitable for inquisitive eyes, we went out to the garden again, leaving Rudolph looking less seraphic than usual, and Francesco inhaling a Scissors cigarette.

From the even purring of the engine, and what we could make out from examining the car by the torch, we soon realised that we had "struck oil." The tyres were nearly new, the upholstering and general ap-

pearance of the bodywork showed that it had been cared for. It was a typical G.H.Q. brass-hat sort of car, all comfortable and complete. In a side-pocket we found a diary in German, and ration-book, which we confiscated. A knife, fork, spoon, and part of a pork-pie were in another wallet, together with numerous sparking plugs and other spares of all kinds, showing that the chauffeur had left in a hurry, just as Francesco had said. The car was worth two thousand pounds Turkish money, we decided. If Government by any chance refused it, we would take it as a speculation ourselves.

Then we returned to bargain. But the conspirators had not become chastened by their *tête-à-tête*. They were still in contradictory mood.

"We'll let you have the car for three hundred gold sovereigns in cash," said Francesco generously.

"No, we won't," said Rudolph; "the very lowest is four hundred and fifty."

"If you don't want to talk business," said my partner, "you had better go home."

"Will you take fifty?" I added with a yawn; "because, if we can't agree, I'm going to bed."

"I didn't come here to be made a fool of," said Rudolph, rising.

"Seventy-five," we said. "You can take it or leave it."

But Rudolph was huffed, and went out. Francesco held up his hands in despair, and followed him. They returned to the garden, and stood there nervously, striking matches, while the bear snored. He had grown tired of all the fuss, and thought, I dare say, that we were a very badly-managed circus.

We lit cigars and waited to see what would happen. It was now half-past two o'clock of the morning. That the conspirators would care to take the car away and lose the bird in the hand for two in the bush seemed to us very improbable. And so it proved.

Francesco returned to say that Rudolph was taking the car away.

"Let him," we said. "Good-bye. Mind the step—and the bear."

But still he lingered.

"If you give us two hundred in gold," he said, "I am content to lose my commission, so as to satisfy Rudolph."

"That is nobly spoken," I said. "I should bring your friend back here for a cigar."

Presently Rudolph returned.

"Look here," we said; "we don't want to be all night about this business. . . ."

Well, we were not all night, but we were quite long enough for me to become bemused with sleep. I am not very clear how we clinched the bargain, suffice it to say that the opposite parties were getting very tired also, and that we played on their natural disinclination to find a new garage and the obvious advantages of an immediate sale. . . . We came to terms

for one hundred and thirty-five pounds, excluding what it cost us in loss of sleep and alcohol and nicotine.

Now came the task of counting out the money, which, for obvious reasons, is quite a ceremony in the underworld. Nothing must change from hand to hand lest an unseemly dispute should arise, in the course of payment, as to the amount that has already passed from one set of greedy fingers to the other.

When the payment is made in notes, they are laid upon a table face upwards by the payee in piles of twenty: then the recipient advances towards the table and examines each note, counts them, and finally puts them into his pocket. It is worthy of remark that the last note in each pile is never lifted from the table by the recipient until the bargain is concluded, because it is always within the bounds of possibility that two notes have stuck together, or that the payee has been fool enough to miscount and put one note too many in the pile, when it would not be in the recipient's interest to call attention to the mistake by looking under the twentieth note.

We made thirteen cylinders of ten sovereigns each, and half a cylinder. Then Rudolph and Francesco came up to the library table and examined the money, while we watched them.

In the course of this inspection all the lights went out. Suspecting foul play, I elbowed Rudolph away from the table, while Robin went to the door to prevent any attempt to bolt. The money-bag fell on the floor in the moment's confusion.

Then some one struck a match and tried the switch. But the current had been cut off at the main. We were in darkness. And not our house alone, but all Pera was plunged in gloom. Some more members of the Committee of Union and Progress were escaping, we heard later, and had taken this convenient method of advertising their departure, while at the same time eluding the detectives who were waiting for them at the docks.

After finding and lighting some candles—how the owners of the house would have shuddered had they known that four rascals were sitting in their library, round rum and gold and cheap cigars, bargaining by the light of tallow dips in bottle-mouths! —we checked over the money again and paid it to Francesco, to whom, as the representative of the Profiteer (and having no official cognisance of the methods by which the car was acquired), we decided to entrust the money.

Francesco, in his turn, and in the same manner, disbursed thirty-five sovereigns to Rudolph, which seemed to me a slight recompense for the work he had done. However, there may have been wheels within wheels of which we knew nothing.

And here I must confess to a serious blunder. I omitted to count the cash remaining in my money-bag that evening, with the result that, on the following day, when making up my accounts, I found I was twenty sovereigns short. I am afraid that this was due to my carelessness entirely. When and where and how the money was lost I do not know, but I am afraid it was on the present occasion. However, the authorities were kind about it, considering they had had value for their money in the matter of the Mercedes, and the sum of twenty pounds "unaccounted for" was passed without demur.

After paying the conspirators and giving them a Dutch Havanna apiece and a glass of black beer, we saw them safely off the premises. Then we bolted and barred the garden gate against any attempt at theft of our newly-purchased treasure. For greater security we also extracted a small but vital part of its mechanism, namely, the magneto pencil. Finally, we left a very thick jam sandwich in the bear's platter, and went to bed.

. . . . . .

We only slept an hour or two, for as soon as it was light enough to see, we went out to inspect our prize.

She was a bargain, and we were overjoyed.

Even the discovery that I had lost twenty pounds, which I made later in the morning, did not damp my spirits. The car was worth a thousand at market rates. And no one was the worse off: in fact, not only had the cause of civilisation benefited by its acquisition, but the conspirators were contented, and so were we.

That forenoon we had occasion to go to the Banque Ottoman, and we travelled thither in the Mercedes. Having left her at the door for a few minutes, we were surprised to find on our return that a *posse* of German soldiers had taken possession of her.

Their sergeant addressed us in German. But we could not and would not understand. My partner took his seat at the wheel while I swung the starting-handle.

Then up spake a corporal, in English.

"You cannot have this car," he said, more in sorrow than in anger, "because it belongs to General Liman von Sanders."

"The General sold it to us last night," I said.

"It is German Government property, sir," said the corporal, pointing to the large black eagle on the panel.

"Your Government resigned yesterday," I answered, "and you can give the General our compliments, and say that if he cares to call on us at Rue Arslan we will be happy to give him a personal explanation. Otherwise, I am very much——"

But my companion was tired of talk. He cut the cackle and slipped in the gear and we shot downhill with full throttle, leaving the Germans gaping.

. . . . . .

Although the General did not call himself, having other more pressing matters to attend to, we found that a junior German officer had visited us five times in the course of the evening. But he never got further than the doorstep, nor any information beyond a bland "Not at home."

I tried to picture the scene.

"What would you have done if he had insisted on coming in and taking the car?" I asked M'Tavish.

"I should have called the police, sir," he said, stiffening at the mere idea of such an intrusion.

. . . . . .

My accomplice (but hang reticence! — Sir Robert Paul was more than my accomplice: he was the prime mover in this story, whose telling has fallen to me) was in Constantinople in December of last year, and saw our prize several times carrying a party of high British officials to their duties. On one occasion, seeing her outside the British Embassy, he spoke to the Greek chauffeur, whom he knew of old.

"Ça 'gaze' toujours?" he asked. "Gaze" is French flying corps slang for "marche."

"Mais mieux que jamais!" was the reply. "Il n'y a que le Rolls Royce du Haut Commissionaire qui marche comme elle."

LORD KITCHENER.[1]

SIR GEORGE ARTHUR'S 'Life of Lord Kitchener' is, as all lives should be, the work of a partisan. He has set his old chief in the favourable light in which he saw him, and it is vastly to Lord Kitchener's honour that his biographer has nowhere found it necessary to attenuate the truth or to obscure the facts. Throughout his career Lord Kitchener lived (so to say) on parade. What he did was always in the public eye; what he said was always in the public ear. He had nothing to conceal, and very little to defend. His life was all of one piece—devoted to the service of his country. His character, also, was of a piece—simple, instinctive, unconscious. And Sir George Arthur, in recording the deeds and the words of his hero, has painted a skilful and sympathetic portrait, at full length, of a gallant soldier and a wise statesman, to whom the Empire owes more than to any other of his time and generation.

Like many another great man, Kitchener gave at the outset few proofs of genius. At Woolwich he gained but little glory, and an appointment on the Palestine Survey does not seem a good approach to the War Office. Nevertheless it was in Palestine that he first learned the lessons which stood him in good stead all his life. There he began his mastery of the East, its men, its customs, and its languages. Henceforth the East was something more to him than a vocation; it was a home. The ties which bound him to Egypt were never snapped. Wherever he was, it was to Cairo that his eyes were turned. He bought an island near Assuan and cultivated it. It was in the desert that he thought most easily and clearly, and had he survived the war, he would certainly have returned to the country where he had won his first victories, and which was more closely intimate to his understanding than the land of his fathers.

As he loved the East and knew it, so he did not long lack the appreciation of others who knew and loved it. "Whoever comes up here," wrote Gordon as early as 1884, "had better appoint Major Kitchener Governor-General," and it was fitting that the early years which Kitchener spent in Egypt were years of apprenticeship for the task which he presently achieved, of avenging Gordon's death and of pacifying the Soudan. In 1892 he was appointed by Lord Cromer to be Sirdar, and he began slowly and laboriously to prepare for the campaign

[1] Life of Lord Kitchener. By Sir George Arthur. London: Macmillan & Co. 3 volumes.

which ended in the battle of Omdurman. From the very first he proved that he was much else besides a soldier. He possessed many qualities which were less showy than useful. He had a natural sense of finance. The late Lord Salisbury said that he was the only soldier in his experience who understood and practised economy. "He did not think that extravagance was the necessary handmaid of efficiency," wrote Lord Cromer, who had a perfect trust in his wisdom and ability. "On the contrary, he was a rigid economist." And it was his rigid economy which made the march to Omdurman possible, despite the scruples of a sometimes parsimonious and embarrassed Government. Hand in hand with his rigid economy there went a talent of organisation which provided for all the risks and chances of a campaign. Kitchener thought always ahead. He was not one who trusted to fortune, or who believed that accident might atone for the faults of imprudence. "Oh, for a little luck! but I never get any," he wrote years afterwards from South Africa. He was backed by something better than luck—a clear knowledge of the end he wanted to reach, and of the best road by which he might approach that end.

When in 1896 the Omdurman campaign was begun, Kitchener knew that he might depend upon the loyal support of the British Agent who was his chief. Cromer himself, in supporting Kitchener, was convinced that little else was required of him than sympathy and approval. "I abstained," said he, "from mischievous activity, and I acted as a check upon the interference of others." Seldom has a happier combination been found of soldier and civil governor. "Elasticity," writes Sir George Arthur, "was of the essence of the scheme, and Cromer willingly allowed Kitchener, when necessary, to communicate directly with agents in England, with the War Office, and even with the Admiralty, —reserving to himself the final word for every transaction and every important move. He left to the Commander in the field the same free hand which he himself obtained from the Cabinet. Complete accord between two strong men—backed as they were at home by a strong Prime Minister—was the underlying success in operations which lasted for over two years, and had their full meed of difficulties, doubts, and disappointments." Nor was Lord Kitchener slow to acknowledge the "oneness of purpose and cheerful determination" which Lord Cromer's loyalty made possible. "For a great enterprise, a master-mind is necessary," said he, at the Guildhall on November 4, 1898. "Lord Cromer was our master, and it was due to his able direction that the reconquest of the Sudan was accomplished."

The practical difficulties which Kitchener had to overcome were neither few nor slight. Railways had to be constructed, since transport

and supply were the first and last necessities of the campaign, and the stuff of which railways are made was generally lacking. "It may not be known," wrote an officer on Kitchener's staff, "that K. ran the Dongola expedition on the old railway material abandoned after the Wolseley expedition of 1884. His early R.E. training stood him in good stead, and no one else could have made such use of the extraordinary material lying about. Rails were dragged out of mud-huts, where they had for many years done duty as rafters, railway-fastenings used as kitchen grates were collected, and everything of the least use was hunted out and worked in." These difficulties were great enough, and they were not alone. The elements fought with a kind of savagery against the Sirdar's advance. The north wind, which in the living memory of man had never failed to blow at this season, and upon which Kitchener relied to bring up his supply-boats from Halfa, was suddenly replaced by scorching dust-laden blasts from the south. Whirlwinds of sand and violent tempests of rain completed the havoc begun by the south wind. Then the low-pressure cylinder of the *Zafir*, designed to take part in the attack upon Dongola, burst beyond repair. But no disaster could check the Sirdar's steady advance, and by September 22 Dongola was in our hands. Thus was reached the first stage in the recovery of the Soudan, and there for a year the campaign halted.

Meanwhile Kitchener's purpose to advance as far as Omdurman was strengthened by the rumour that a French expedition, led by Colonel Marchand, was on its way to Fasheda, and the Government at home cordially approved his design. The work of preparation went steadily on. Railroads were made, stores collected, soldiers trained, and at last the victory of Omdurman laid open the road to Khartoum. Thus was the Soudan reconquered—thus was Gordon's murder avenged. "Ouf! it is all over," wrote Kitchener to a friend, "and I feel like a rag—but very very thankful there was no hitch." A peerage was the just reward of the Sirdar's triumph, and congratulations came to him from statesmen and soldiers, from French and English alike. But, as Sir George Arthur says, he took greater pleasure in Grenfell's simple despatch than in any other compliment that was paid him. "Arrangements for the transport of the forces to the vicinity of the battlefield," wrote Grenfell, "were made by the Sirdar and his Staff with consummate ability. All difficulties were foreseen and provided for, and from the start of the campaign till its close at Omdurman operations have been conducted with a precision and completeness which have been beyond all praise, while the skill shown in the advance was equalled by the ability with which the Army was

commanded in the field. . . . Never were greater results achieved at such a trifling cost." Thus ended in victory, complete and incontestable, Kitchener's first great achievement, and the firmness and tact wherewith he treated Colonel Marchand, when he met him at Fashoda, showed that he possessed the qualities of a diplomatist as well as those of a general.

A year after Omdurman Great Britain was at war with the South African republics, and the second act in the drama of Kitchener's life began. It was not his to enjoy leisure or to rest long from his labours. Lightly as Great Britain entered upon the struggle, Kitchener was not deceived by any false hopes. He did not harbour the comfortable faith that the campaign would be "short, sharp, and decisive." He never was of those who think what they like to think. Moreover, his intuition of what the future held in store revealed him again and again a prophet of the truth. When an eager soldier told him that he feared he would reach South Africa too late to see any fighting, Kitchener warned him that the war would be "long and laborious, and fraught with more grief than glory." He was presently to discover for himself the ill-omened accuracy of his forecast.

How Great Britain was aroused from its state of apathetic contentment by the events of the Black Week, how Lord Roberts was given the supreme command, with Kitchener as his Chief of Staff, all the world remembers. The two great soldiers landed at the Cape in January 1900, and set themselves at once to solve the difficulty of fighting a mobile enemy in a vast country, which he knew as he knew his pocket. To Kitchener was assigned the duty of pursuing Cronje and of overtaking his laager. The first attack upon Paardeberg Drift did not meet with the success which Kitchener had hoped, and Roberts determined, in his anxiety to avoid further casualties, not upon a further attack, but upon an investment. That Kitchener made mistakes in his assault may be admitted. It is certain, on the other hand, that his general plan of the battle was correct. The investment, in truth, did not result in the saving of many lives. The troops were compelled to drink the water of the Modder, fouled by the carcasses of Cronje's slaughtered horses and cattle, and the result was an outbreak of enteric, which caused many more casualties than did the assault upon Paardeberg Drift. Moreover, as Kitchener foresaw, writes Sir George Arthur, "the investment of Cronje, protracted over several days, gave the burghers of the Free State just the breathing time that they required, and they were able with revived courage to muster anew their forces — now strengthened by the late besiegers of Ladysmith — for opposing Roberts's march to

Bloemfontein." And in these terms does the biographer sum up the case in his hero's favour: "Kitchener—as was his wont—was taking the long view both when he determined to attack on the 18th and when he sought to renew the attempt on the following morning; and if his methods in the battle were inevitably incorrect, his broad grasp of the situation—more especially in its relation to the future—was correct in itself and stands vindicated in the light of the later story of the campaign."

In November 1900 Roberts returned home, and the command-in-chief was given to Kitchener. If one war was over, another and a far more difficult was beginning. "It is no longer real war out here," wrote Kitchener, "but police operations of considerable magnitude to catch various bands of men who resist and do all that they can to avoid arrest." And so began the policy of "drive and blockade," which Kitchener pursued with energy and courage until the victory was won. And while he carried on the war with untiring industry, he was ready, whenever a chance offered, to discuss terms of peace. He conferred with Botha as early as February 1901, and peace, he thought, might have been made, had the Government shown a little more consideration for the susceptibilities of the Boers. Botha demanded a complete amnesty for the rebels of the Cape and Natal. The British Government declined to grant this amnesty. That the Government had justice on its side is indisputable. Whether it was prudent in its rigour is another question. "The feeling is that a complete amnesty will be a surviving reproach to us. The loyalists have surely a right to see the very moderate Cape punishments inflicted on rebels." Thus wrote Mr Brodrick. "We are now carrying on the war," said Kitchener, on the other hand, "to put two or three hundred Dutchmen in prison at the end of it. It seems to me absurd and wrong, and I wonder the Chancellor of the Exchequer did not have a fit." The two opinions, each supported with a measure of right, were irreconcilable, and the war went on.

Kitchener's conduct of the war, his habit of holding in his own hands all the threads of the campaign, have been unfavourably and even severely criticised. His method, says Sir George Arthur, "was depreciated in some quarters as comparable rather to the working of a machine than to the action of an organism instinct with life—as depending too exclusively on symmetry of plan and punctuality of execution, and as relying too little on spontaneous dash and individual cunning. It was not unusual, while applauding his achievements as a great organiser, to find fault with his tendency to control everything in person—*Qui trop embrasse mal étreint.*" And Sir George Arthur admits that Kitchener was not "the ideal Staff director." Yet, if he did not

spare others, he did not spare himself, and his habit of intervening in operations was rarely protested against in the field. "His treatment of officers," says Sir George Arthur, "was the reverse of that sometimes ascribed to him. . . . So far from being a hard taskmaster, intolerant of failure, his fault, if any, lay in the opposite direction. He himself admitted that he was not fluent in praise, but he was prone to approve." In brief, like other great men, he made mistakes. How should he not, when he attempted to achieve so much? And when a true account is cast, the balance is immeasurably in his favour.

The third act in the drama of his life opened in 1914, when at the outbreak of the great war Kitchener went to the War Office. We all know now what he was asked to achieve, and how well he achieved it. His first words, when he entered his office, were, "there is no Army." It was his duty to invent, to build, to strengthen a vast military fabric. He found Great Britain organised for peace and the bitter disputes of peace, and he set himself to convert her into a great military power. Everything was lacking—even the foundation upon which to build. There was the Expeditionary Force, and that was all. Sir George Arthur has sketched the lack of thought and preparation accurately enough. "There had been no serious consideration of the possible multiplication of theatres of war, of the defence of the Empire as a whole"—thus he writes—"or of the systematic enlargement of its military resources. Moreover, the Government, in placid nescience of the real nature of an emergency of which the vague shadow had long been projected, had formed no plans for its own war organisation. No attempt had been made to define or delimit the respective functions of the statesman, the soldier, and the sailor in the higher control and conduct of naval and military operations. With the outbreak of war the term 'general staff' became little more than a term. There was no security for quick military decisions; there was every inducement to leisurely political debate; the fact seemed to have been blinked that naval and military counsel, to be of value in war time, should be prepared by a scientifically contrived organisation, and presented by a single responsible authority ready to carry out the advice offered." In brief, the ignorance and neglect of our politicians, who profess now to have foreseen the war, and who made no attempt to prepare for it, are the best measure of the gigantic task which now confronted Kitchener.

And Kitchener, with his swift habit of intuition, saw more clearly than any one the magnitude of the burden laid upon him. He looked, as always, ahead. He was not of the foolish optimists who believed in a short war. He knew that the struggle would be

bitter and prolonged — from three to five years was his forecast; and he realised that the issue would depend upon the last million troops we could put into the field. He began at once to create the armies which should carry out the design of victory. He dismissed, without discussion, the accepted plan of the Government that we should send six divisions overseas to the help of France, that the Territorial Force should be kept at home to defend the country, and that the Special Reserve should feed the Expeditionary Force. As Sir George Arthur says, "he immediately laid his plans for an army of seventy divisions, coolly calculating that its maximum strength would be reached during the third year of the war, just when the enemy would be undergoing a sensible diminution of his resources in man-power." His demand for men was immediately responded to. Fortunately for us, Kitchener had won the complete confidence of the country. Even the Labour members were kind enough to pronounce him "straight," and to withhold from him the opposition which they commonly have ready for those who defend the cause of Empire. His call to arms was heard and echoed from one end of the country to the other. The men flocked to the colours because they knew that the best use would be made of them, that Kitchener would do nothing to outrage or impair their patriotism. "The marvel of the thing," says Sir George Arthur, "grows as it recedes into the past. We were even now at war, yet we had 'no Army'! The Army had still to be created—the men enrolled, housed, fed, clothed, trained, armed, and equipped; the guns and rifles, with their ammunition, manufactured; the whole organisation and machinery of a mighty military force extemporised." Such was the problem which Kitchener solved. And let it be remembered that he was not content with any makeshift. His extemporised army aimed at the very highest in training and equipment, and the event showed that it did not miss its aim.

Nor was the raising and equipping of the new armies the only difficulty which Kitchener had to face. The Expeditionary Force, under the command of Sir John French, was retiring before the onslaught of the Germans. Kitchener's instructions were never doubtful. He saw that the essential strategy was for the British Force to keep in touch with the French armies, that everything must be abandoned, even the Channel ports, which endangered this main design. If only the Germans had succeeded in driving a wedge between the British and the French they could have dealt with us separately, and most disastrously affected the spirit both of France and England. Whatever happened, Kitchener was resolute that the French and British should not be separated in the

field, and the result proved the wisdom of his decision. As Sir George Arthur says, "had we fallen back on the coast instead of upon Paris, there would have been no battle of the Marne."

Thus a very great service was done to the Empire by Kitchener, when, at the end of August 1914, he opposed Sir John French's expressed intention to retire beyond Paris. The news first came to him from General Robb, the Inspector-General of Communications, and he instantly demanded of Sir John the meaning of the message. Little comfort did he get. "I have let General Joffre know plainly," telegraphed Sir John, "that in the present position of my troops I shall be absolutely unable to remain in the front line, as he has now begun his retirement. I have decided to begin my retirement to-morrow, in the morning, behind the Seine. . . . My base is now in the neighbourhood of La Rochelle, and I am forming an advance base at Le Mans." Thus the Commander-in-Chief telegraphed, and on the same day despatched a desperate letter of confirmation. "I feel most strongly," he wrote, "the absolute necessity for retaining in my hands complete independence of action and power to retire on my base when circumstances render it necessary. I have been pressed very hard to remain, even in my shattered condition, in the fighting line; but I have absolutely refused to do so, and I hope you will approve of the course I have taken." And by an ill-omened coincidence, on the very day on which this letter was written, London was startled by the miserable despatch, placarded in the streets, that as a fighting force the British Army had ceased to exist.

Kitchener's resolve was at once taken. He was determined at all hazards that the British force should not desert the French. So long as the two armies fell back in unison, so long as the Germans failed to separate them, no irreparable harm could be done. Such was his well-founded opinion, and his first steps were to ask the Prime Minister to summon the Cabinet, and to telegraph to the Commander-in-Chief for an explanation. "I am surprised at your decision," he wrote, "to retire behind the Seine. Please let me know, if you can, all your reasons for this move. What will be the effect of this course upon your relations with the French Army, and on the general military situation? Will your retirement leave a gap in the French line, or cause them discouragement, of which the Germans might take advantage to carry out their first programme of first crushing the French and then being free to attack Russia?" Sir John French's answer merely repeated what he had already said. "An effective offensive movement," he wrote, "now appears to be open to the French, which will probably close the gap by uniting their inner flanks. But

as they will not take such an opportunity, I do not see why I should be called upon to run the risk of absolute disaster in order a second time to save them."

To argue further by telegram seemed futile, and Kitchener resolved to cross the Channel at once, that he might press upon the Commander-in-Chief the considered opinion of the Cabinet. At half-past one on the morning of September 1st he walked into the bed-room of Sir Edward Grey to tell him that, after consulting the Prime Minister, he had ordered a destroyer to be ready in three hours to take him to Le Havre. The two soldiers met at the British Embassy in Paris, the place chosen by Sir John French, and there Kitchener explained what was the policy of the British Government, without of course any wish to interfere in the military execution of that policy. The result of the conversation was thus summed up by Kitchener: "French's troops are now engaged in the fighting line, where he will remain conforming to the movements of the French Army, though at the same time acting with caution to avoid being in any way unsupported on his flanks." Thus was averted a serious calamity, and Kitchener might well look back with satisfaction upon the tact and promptitude with which he had kept the British Army in the field. Four days later began the battle of the Marne.

No less a service did Kitchener render to the Empire when he opposed Mr George's harebrained scheme to concentrate our forces in the East. Mr George, no expert in military matters, had convinced himself, early in 1915, that victory in the West was impossible, and he thought that the country would be furious if the magnificent army, then in the making, were thrown away upon "futile enterprises such as we have witnessed during the last few weeks." His proposal seems ridiculous enough now. It was nothing less than "to establish a considerable reserve in England from which France could be helped if hard pressed—a certain number of men being stationed at Boulogne in case of emergency—and to transfer the whole of the British Army in France—bag and baggage, lock, stock, and barrel—and to dedicate the new forces to the Balkans. He sought thus to reinforce Serbia, attract Italy and Greece to our side, overawe Bulgaria, and possibly to persuade Rumania to join us." Kitchener would have none of it. He declined peremptorily to leave the French in the lurch or to remove any troops from Egypt. And so Mr George's famous "stunt" came to nothing. The British Army remained where it was to do the work for which it was trained, and Germany was not permitted to overrun France while the British forces were busy with a wild adventure in the Balkans.

When the new armies were in the making, there remained

the difficulty of equipping them. The British democracy, lulled to a false security by its leaders, had refused to provide the material of war. "The starved ordnance firms," as Sir George Arthur says, "whose eyes waited almost entirely on the Lords of the Admiralty for orders, were, with little plant and less material, impotent to meet sudden and staggering demands." Not only was there a dangerous lack of munitions; there existed no machinery to produce them. "Did they remember," asked Kitchener, "when they went headlong into a war like this, that they were without an army, and without any preparation to equip one?" However, what could be done was done. A Cabinet Committee on Munitions was appointed, and the Secretary for War presided over its first meeting. Men of science were bidden to aid the War Office with their knowledge and research. The omnipotent trade unions had to be conciliated, and that was not easy. "While the workmen generally," said Kitchener on March 15, 1915, in the House of Lords, "have worked loyally and well, there have, I regret to say, been instances where absence, irregular time-keeping, and slack work have led to a marked diminution in the output of our factories." Yet upon the supply of war material the safety of the Empire depended, and Kitchener has been blamed because he could not achieve the impossible, because in some places labour most dangerously put into practice the principles which flattering demagogues had instilled in it. And when, during the autumn of 1915, the production of ammunition marvellously increased, the increase was put down by the partisans of our politicians to the expert energy of the newly-established Ministry of Munitions. Thus an obvious injustice was done to Kitchener and the War Office. As Sir George Arthur points out, "the rights of the matter can best be understood by adducing a concrete fact. The Ministry of Munitions was set up during the first week of June 1915. It was not until October 1915 that a single component of ammunition worth speaking of was delivered from the Ministry of Munitions' factories or orders, and not until April 1916 that the first complete round, made and filled under the orders and arrangements of the Ministry, was delivered to the Army authorities. In other words, the Army, for a period of more than eighteen months, was furnished with continually increasing supplies under the arrangements made by the War Office." Kitchener was not a man of words, and with equanimity and without protest he saw his fame besmirched and his credit filched from him by the politicians.

The worst of it was that the discussion concerning the supply of munitions was exacerbated by partisan rancour and political jealousy. There is no doubt

that the Ministry, when once it was established, admirably justified itself. There is as little doubt that the War Office had given the Ministry the experience by which it profited and the machinery which it turned to magnificent account. But, says Sir George Arthur, "embedded in the story of the supply of munitions is the unhappy occasion when, from the battle of Festubert, the Commander-in-Chief sent an extra aide-de-camp and a secretary to London, with the double design of effecting a minor *coup-d'état* and inflaming public opinion against the War Secretary, the man to whom he wrote, 'Thank God you are there, and I mean it.'" This episode asks no comment.

When Kitchener went to the War Office in 1914 he said he would not be content until he had put 70 divisions in the field. By January 1916 he could say with truth that 67 divisions were ready and the other 3 in the making. He had foreseen what was needed, and had given it to the country. Then, with a dramatic unexpectedness, death overtook him. On June 5, 1916, he went on board the *Hampshire* at Scapa on his way to Russia. In Sir George Arthur's words, "by an unhappy error of judgment, an unswept channel was chosen for the passage of the cruiser, and Kitchener — the secret of whose journey had been betrayed — was to fall into the machinations of England's enemies, and to die swiftly at their hands. The faithful steward must suddenly give an account of his stewardship."

From Sir George Arthur's narrative you may gain not merely a knowledge of what Kitchener did for the Empire, but an insight into his character. He had in him all the elements of grandeur. His aspect, his voice, his gesture, all betokened a great man. He filled more space in a room than other men, as he filled more space in the world. Lord Salisbury, in an excellent preface, describes him as a solitary figure—"solitary in the sense that he stood mentally and morally aloof from other men." And this aloofness was intensified—again to cite Lord Salisbury's words — because "he was a man whose resolution was as inevitable as fate, who would move to his determined end without compunction and even without mercy." As he was resolute, so also he was simple in character. He knew neither trickery nor cunning. Indeed, he was ill equipped for the strife of politics, into which he was led perforce, for he knew nothing of intrigue, and he was always unwilling to talk. He had a rooted aversion from disputes of all kinds. "We are here to fight the Germans," he would say, and the time and energy spent in discussion were always, in his judgment, wasted. He resembled other men of action in the instinctiveness of his conclusions. "The important thing in his eyes," says Lord

Salisbury, "was that a decision should be right, not that it could be defended. It did not make it less right because he had never learnt the art of controversy." His devotion to his Sovereign and his country was absolute. He had a soldier's sense of duty, and harboured no other thought than to serve the King and the people, who had put their trust in him ungrudgingly. Thus it was always his work which absorbed him. He had no home, as he said himself, and he knew few of the pleasures which sweeten life for the most of men. He worked without respite until the end, and no better epitaph can be found for him than that quoted by Sir George Arthur: "In life he knew no rest, in death he found no grave."

VIGNETTES.

BY ELLA MACMAHON.

V. MUSHA ANDY.

He goes by this name in consequence of a habit of prefacing most of his remarks with "musha," an ejaculation of obscure origin, and one somewhat out of date, at least with the younger generation. But Andy is not young—far from it. It is difficult to guess his age, for as long as I can remember he has looked exactly the same, and that is anything from sixty to eighty. He is a small old man, bent nearly double, with shoulders so round as to be almost globular. He has long arms and short legs and immensely strong muscles. He grows a fringe of beard encircling his cheeks and chin, and shaves his upper lip. His gums are toothless, save for three horny front teeth in the upper jaw and a few scattered stumps in the lower. It is said that one of the longest and most prong-like of the upper row was once a horse's tooth, which Andy stuck into the gap left by his own, but for the truth of this I cannot vouch. Yet it may be owing to it that he is inclined to dribble when he speaks. One corner of his mouth has a permanent droop, caused by the pressure of the pipe (a very dirty clay) which is constantly stuck there, alight or not. His clothing consists of a pair of corduroy trousers, tied below the knee with a wisp of straw or rope, a waistcoat with sleeves, huge coarse boots, showing a glimpse of bare leg above them, and laced with string. His coat he usually carries over his shoulder. He may possibly wear a shirt, but he has certainly never worn a collar. He can neither read nor write, his travels have been circumscribed within five miles, he has never been in a train.

In the days of his youth he was one of the best ploughmen in the country, but he does not follow the plough now, though he can still dig as well and as vigorously as ever, and he is a notable hand with pigs. Pigs, potatoes, and the plough make up the sum of Andy's interest in things terrestrial,—with one addition, fishing. His participation in that sport is peculiar, for to my knowledge he has never possessed a rod or thrown a fly, nevertheless on occasion he has proved himself an efficient if amateurish gillie; and incredible as it may sound, he has been known to gaff a salmon with a pitchfork.

The fisherman's art is frequently accused of engendering unsocial qualities; be this as it may, no one could describe Andy as sociable. He lives absolutely alone in a tumble-down cabin from which, by

some unexplainable right of inheritance, none can evict him, and views with naked contempt the new "labourers' cottages" which an enlightened legislature has erected around him.

"Musha," he says of them disdainfully, "ye'd get yer death in them with the windas that do be in them."

The æsthetic aspect of these dwellings leaves him quite cold. He does not like roses (rambler or otherwise); he likes manure.

"They are so good for the women and children," I remark, in mild extenuation of their existence.

"Ay, musha, 'tis all they *are* good for."

Andy is not married. The tale runs that far back in his youth he "asked" a girl, but that the financial negotiations incident to marriage having broken down, he walked out of the house with the parting remark to the maiden's father, "Musha faith! ye may keep her," and from that hour lived celibate.

His opinion of women and children has remained permanently coloured by this episode. On being reminded that without women and children the world would speedily come to an end, he makes it clear that his estimation of the world is such that its extinction would be no calamity; yet I think he would be sorry to part with his pigs.

Of the great events which shake the world from time to time, it would be difficult to say how much he knows or understands. In an age when events are so largely manufactured by the newspapers, it is impossible to assess the knowledge of one to whom newspapers are a dead letter. Even with regard to the local topics wherewith the air is filled, he remains aloof and seemingly indifferent.

Spoken to about Sinn Fein, he gazed at me and observed slowly—

"I once seen Par-*nell*. He was a good man. Musha they tell me he's dead. Would that be true now?"

When I reply in the affirmative, he shakes his head.

"It's the good people are taken; th' others are not wanted above or below, and so they're left here to tormint us."

In spite of his disabilities, however, I suspect he knows more about current events and modern conditions than he chooses to admit. It is his humour to pose as one blackly ignorant; nevertheless, the other day he said to me—

"There's nothin' cheap but chat," a summary of economic conditions at present as pithy as it was perspicacious.

"Ay, musha, ye'll always get a bargain of that so long as there's women in the worrld." Meeting my eye at this point, a twinkle glimmers in his own, and he hastens to add—

"Sure they're always generous, the cratures!"

Not long ago an aeroplane flew over, the first ever seen in our part of the country. Excitement ran high; every one stood gazing up to heaven at this strange and remarkable sight. For perhaps five minutes Andy left off digging, and with

strained uplifted head watched the winged vehicle of the air swimming through the ether across the blue sky. Then he stuck his spade in the earth and moistened the palms of his hands.

"Would there be any one up in that?" His face is inscrutably composed.

"Two men," I reply.

He moistens a little more.

"Augh-a-musha, they've little to do with their lives, so they have, that'd trust themselves to *that*."

Sometimes I go a-fishing. My luck is seldom brilliant—a circumstance which Andy ascribes with ungallant and out-of-date conviction to the accident of my sex—but on this one occasion the unbelievable nearly happened. After more than an hour of industrious but futile endeavour, I suddenly felt a tug which sent my heart into my mouth. Agonised seconds of suspense resolved themselves into the certainty of a salmon on the line! To throw a fly for trout and catch a salmon! Flaming visions of an epic return to home, bearing with me this lordly trophy to lay at the feet of relations stricken for once into awed admiration, dazzle and intoxicate me. With panting breast and quivering nerves I enter upon the struggle to land my prey. But the battle is indeed to the strong. Bereft of gaff or help, what chance have I? From first to last I am outclassed. Suddenly in the midst of chagrin and approaching defeat I catch sight of Andy digging in an adjacent field. He is within call. I call; he heeds not. I cry, I yell, I scream. No response. At length, after interminable ages, during which the monster (a 17-pounder at least, my imagination feels sure) at the other end is dragging my arms out of their sockets, he raises himself, and turning round scans the far horizon with inquiring mien. I shout again, but with no result. I cannot beckon, for my hands are glued to the rod in desperate grip. But I yell till my voice breaks and dies in a strangled cry. He has returned to his work, and continues to dig unmoved. And with my last breath away my captive goes free and victorious, while in the jerk of release I nearly fall backwards on the bank. Crushed and collapsed, all I can do is to recover sufficient strength to pack up and go hence—empty. The flaming vision of triumph is replaced by flaming anger with Andy. I wish I could kill that old man. I should like to see him dig his own grave. Worn with emotion and bursting with spleen, I approach him with what I trust is the vengeful dignity of an accusing angel.

He is still digging.

Infuriation makes me long to lay my rod across these bowed shoulders.

"*Well!*" I exclaim when I am standing over him, "that was a pretty trick to play me! Do you hear?"

The spade arrested by the movement of his hands remains uplifted. He turns himself upwards painfully.

"Eh-h?"

I really do want to kill him.

"I had a salmon"—fury lends concentration to my accents—"on the line just now."

The grasp of his hands on the handle of the spade relaxes and his face quickens.

"A salmon! Glory be to God!"

"Yes, and I've lost him," —once more my voice breaks between anger and disappointment,—"thanks to *you*."

The spade slides slowly out of his hands to fall unheeded at his feet.

"Musha, don't tell me that."

"I do," I cry shrilly.

He stands transfixed, his face quivering. I have never seen him so moved.

"Oh, be the Holy Father, that's a terrible awful thing—to lose a salmon!" He seems dazed.

"Yes," I retort. "But what could I do? I had no gaff, and it's no joke to land a twenty-pound fish. . . . I roared and shouted to you, and you wouldn't take the trouble to cross the field to help me. Did you think I was shouting like that for fun?"

He gazes at me with grief-stricken eyes, and lips that tremble so much that the old pipe becomes dislodged from its corner and drops out of his mouth to the ground, where, like the spade, it lies unregarded. His voice, when he can bring himself to utter a word again, is agitated almost beyond recognition.

"Oh, be the Holy Father, an' if I'd known it was a salmon ye had! But be the way ye were screechin' and cryin', musha, bedad I was full sure 'twas only a child had fell into the river . . ."

A SECRET SURVEY.

BY REAR-ADMIRAL BOYLE SOMERVILLE, C.M.G.

I.

DURING the year 1902 a good deal of diplomatic anxiety had been felt, not only on account of the slow but sure movement of the Russia of those days towards India — an anxiety that had been ours for a long time previously—but because the movement had begun to take another direction, and one even more serious to us. The giant hands and yearning fingers which had been successfully groping south-eastward through the hidden and easy roads of Caucasia and Turkestan, had now begun upon Persia.

Reports reached us of mysterious inspections by "foreigners" of the Persian coastline, evidently seeking for some hitherto disregarded notch in it, which might show possibilities of being converted into a commercial or a naval port, or (better still) into both.

In the early days of 1903 it became necessary to take steps of some sort.

Ever since the seventeenth century, when John Company began to oust Portuguese trade from India, it has been realised that we must hold in our hands that side-door to the East—that 'Tradesmen's entrance"—the Persian Gulf. With this end in view, several naval battles have been fought in the Gulf, from 1620 onwards; all of them forgotten, as "side-shows" easily may be, though all of them were quite successful. The prestige they produced is still maintained visibly and effectively in the sway exercised by the British Political Residents established at various points on both shores of the Gulf. They, in their turn, are supported by naval vessels, whose commanders keep the peace of the narrow seas, preventing piracy, gun-running, and slavery; and are, besides, the upholders of the truce that has been enforced by us on the wild Arab coastal chiefs, in order to keep them from one another's throats. With all of this necessary, ancient, and undisputed supremacy at stake, prompt counteraction against interference by any other nation was necessary. The first step to be taken by the Foreign Office was to inquire at the Admiralty whether there was, in fact, any notch or inlet on the Persian coast which could, with reasonable chance of success, be converted into a Russian naval base. This question having reached their Lordships, was docketed "Urgent," and sent on to the Hydrographic Department.

This Department, in its wide-flung survey of the world, embraces not only all nautical

science and sea-knowledge, but, in those days, still retained in its dark cupboards the germs from which sprang the present Naval Intelligence Division. It was the "Inquire within" on all maritime and naval subjects, and it is still the boast of the Department that no inquirer is ever sent empty away. Admiral Sir William Wharton was Hydrographer to the Admiralty at the time, having already held that responsible post for eighteen years, and on receipt of the pink-tabbed query, he sent at once for the published charts of the Persian Gulf. They were not modern charts, but though the scale on which they had been plotted was a small one, the indentations and other details of the coast-line had every appearance of having been projected from the results of large-scaled scientific surveys. Hydrographic surveyors, god-like as they may appear to be in their attribute of omniscience (as mentioned above), are, however, human to this extent—namely, that some are good and some are evil. The latter denomination, the Untrustworthy, are now all well known. When one or two wrecks have been the result of navigating by his chart, the character of any surveyor as a bungler, or, worse still, as an omitter of rocks and dangers, is soon and painfully established. Sir William looked at the title-heading of the chart (in which the names of its authors are set forth), and saw that while the chart had been "compiled" in 1860 by two reliable men, the actual small and detached surveys from which it had been pieced together had been made during the eighteen-twenties by two named officers of John Company's sea-service, of whose character and ability nothing was known, either one way or the other. Now, the original field-work of all hydrographical surveyors, from which their published charts are drawn, is kept, carefully labelled, and stored in dim cellars of the Admiralty, awaiting a day of judgment, such as now seemed to have dawned for "Captains Gay and Brucks of H.E.I.C. Marine, 1821-28." Sir William sent for these originals.

There is, in the Hydrographic Department, a collection of naval grandfathers who undertake the duties of "Messenger," attended by young boys, presumably their grandsons, "chips," whose most ostensible duty in life is to make tea for the "old blocks."

The order for search for the documents having been received by them through Mr China, the Head Messenger (for such was his remarkable name), great was the company of the paper-chasers. They rushed forth, both grey-haired eld and squeaking youth, down to the Persian Gulf store, leaving the nice drop o' tea wetting in its pot, and the perpetual kettle of the Messengers' Lobby to pour forth its steam upon the deserted air. One hour, two hours

went by; the tea cooled and blackened, the kettle-bottom burnt through, and still the agitated search amongst the dust of archæo-hydrographical ages remained unrewarded by any discovery of the relics of the required date. At last it was found out from the registers that, when John Company "turned over" its naval records to the Admiralty, all that had reached the Hydrographic Department, so far as the Persian Gulf was concerned, were the engraved copperplates, embodying the compilation of 1860 before described, from which the charts themselves were struck. The Hydrographer was not to be satisfied by this discovery, as might have been a lesser man. He cabled to Bombay to inquire where the "originals" were, and to request that they might be sent home at once for his inspection. The reply came back that they no longer existed. There had been a great fire in Bombay dockyard at about the time of the turn-over, and the whole of the documents, with many others, had then been destroyed! "Very well, then," said Sir William Wharton, "an officer must be sent out forthwith to examine the coast of Persia by 'running survey,' and to report whether the Russians will be able to find there a harbour capable of being fortified for use as a commercial and naval base; for the available evidence as to the existence, or otherwise, of such a harbour is not conclusive." The First Lord was notified accordingly, and I was appointed to start for the Persian Gulf by the next steamer to make the required survey.

The cloak of secrecy was cast over me. Instruments and books for my use were gathered together, stealthily, in the Secretary's room, unnamed, unaddressed, which I was to take away furtively and pack in my private portmanteau. I was ordered to drop my rank, and to take my ticket as a plain if mysterious Mister; and, under a general smoke-screen of lies and dissimulation, I set out from Charing Cross at 9 A.M. on April 2, 1903, overland to Marseilles, sailing on the following day for the Shiny East in the (quite appropriately named) P. and O. s.s. *Persia*. The great steamer was nearly empty of passengers, and the few she carried were almost all of them military officers. Unfortunately, one of them happened to be an acquaintance, and this fact at once tore a largish hole in my cloak of invisibility. Those were times when it was still etiquette to ask questions of naval officers as to where they were going, and what job lay before them. Polite interest, such as this, was all the more trying through being quite casual and unnecessary, but it was given to me (by the Father of Lies, I suppose) to reply, on the first occasion of such inquiry, that I was going out to the East Indies Station, "for disposal." This answered perfectly. All the soldiers left

the ship at Aden, and none of them discovered that Commanders are not usually sent out from England, vaguely, "for disposal" by the Admirals of stations; nor that my uniform outfit, for a three years' commission in Indian waters, was locked in two tin cases in my cabin, and consisted chiefly of theodolites, sextants, field note-books, and drawing instruments. At Bombay, having shaken everybody off successfully, I transferred myself darkly to the British India s.s. *Kistna*, and sailed, almost at once, first for Karachi, and thence for the Persian Gulf.

The little *Kistna* was a great change from the ample *Persia*, and nearly every passenger by her was an Asiatic. The heat of the stuffy little cabins was too much even for them, and they all camped, picturesquely, on the deck outside the saloon, on the tops of the cargo hatches, with their unsmiling wives and solemn families,—for no polite Indian person ever laughs or looks happy,—their pipes, their food, the dishes thereof, and their beds. Each family arranged itself in a neat and separate circle. They looked like a series of bored and exclusive picnic parties in Richmond Park on a crowded holiday. The importance of fresh air, and of propinquity to the ship's side, became apparent shortly after we got to sea. No doubt, sad previous experience had recommended to them the democratic deck as a living place, even though first-class saloon fare had been paid. Thus, there were not many available sleeping billets on deck for a lone European. On the first night out, having just dropped into a parboiled slumber in my cabin, I was awakened by a horrible, slow, crunching sound. It came from beneath my bunk, and investigation showed that it proceeded from the ship's cat, which was engaged there in supping off a large rat! I suppose that no cat has ever before (or since) travelled so quickly through space as this one, initial velocity being imparted, with great effect, by means of the metal wind-scoop, seized out of the cabin scuttle, and suitably applied as a propellant to the hinder end of the intruder.

Four days later we arrived at Maskat, where I joined H.M.S. *Sphinx*, the Persian Gulf gunboat carrying the Senior Naval Officer for those waters, at that time Commander Kemp.

Maskat lies on the Oman coast of Arabia, and is the capital of that province, the abiding-place of its Sultan. Although actually outside the Persian Gulf, it occupies so commanding a strategic position near the entrance that it always has, rightly, been considered as an integral part of the "command." It is possessed of a strange and even diabolical picturesqueness. The harbour is a small bay—almost a cove—about a mile deep, and less than half a mile wide. It has a semicircular head, where, on a narrow lunette of flat ground, the white little town

of Maskat lies jammed in between the sea, which bathes its very front doors, and a steep uprising of dark fantastic hills, which curve round immediately behind the city wall at the back. As you enter the bay in a ship, you find yourself shut in immediately, on both sides, by a tattered wall of deep brown precipices, utterly bare, utterly savage, springing suddenly from the coast-line. It seems as if you had been transported into the crater of a volcano, not only through the outward resemblance, but also by the temperature. Every breath of free oceanic air is excluded, and you expect to see slow wreaths of mephitic vapour arising from the exquisitely blue water. It is as hot as the mouth of hell, and has as easy an entrance!

At the head of the bay, dominating the town, on the right hand and on the left respectively, are two fortifications, Meráni and Jaláli by name, so strangely un-Eastern in appearance, indeed so authentically European and medieval that, in the midst of surroundings which epitomise Arabia, they seem to be of the stuff produced by enchantment. They were built by the Portuguese after their capture of Maskat in 1508, and, still untouched by time's rude hand, picturesquely defy the world from their hill-tops with battlements, machicolated towers, and curtain walls. In the centre of the front of the town is the Sultan's palace, and on the left, as you look at it from the sea, is the British Residency, large, square, and white, pressing itself closely into the only gap in the crater wall of the bay—thus getting the first and best of every breath of air that wanders in, having lost its way at sea.

At first sight you wonder why this scene of baking desolation, of hunger, and of drought should ever have been fixed on by man to be his dwelling-place; still less, that it should have become a capital city, even of a desert. After a little search, however, you can distinguish at the back of the town, in a recess among the bare rocky knees of the hills, a fringe of date-palms; and around them there actually exist a few wells, which are made to produce a small area of fertility. The water is levered up to the surface by immense beams, supported on high fulcrums, and poured into the irrigation trenches. All night long you may hear the melancholy groanings and squeakings of these water-hoists. The noise is intentional. It lulls to sleep the owner of the gardens; but if at any time it should cease, the said proprietor uneasily awakens, and becomes conscious that the man in charge of the bullocks that work the lever-machinery has himself sought repose. Then he arises in his wrath, and goes forth to find out why the—what the—who the—all in Arabic, a language more delicately adapted to bring calm to the angry soul than probably any other form of speech. Its neatness

and inventiveness in providing satisfying insults is beyond praise. "Truly," say the happy possessors of this language, "God created three perfect things—the endurance of the camel, the speed of the horse, and the tongue of the Arab."

Besides the food-gardens, there is another reason for the existence of Maskat on its present foundations—namely, the security of the position. There is only one pass-way through the wild hills at the back, from the deserts beyond, by which Bedouin raiders can reach the little city—a narrow defile, whose course is marked by watch-towers; and there is a second road by the beach, also closely defended. As you lie, sweating, on your deck-mattress at night, dreamily cursing the insistently complaining water-hoists, there rises suddenly on your unrest a long and wavering howl, as of a lost soul in its endless agony. It ceases, and is responded to by a second, a third, a fourth, and others in decreasing faintness, like an ugly echo. It is the sentinels of Meráni and Jaláli, of the city walls, and of the hill-towers beyond, proclaiming to each other every hour that they watch, that Allah is in His heaven, and that all's right with the world.

My orders were to examine the whole of the Persian coast, beginning at the Shatt-al-Arab—"the Arab boundary"—namely, the channel by which the Tigris and Euphrates reach the sea—and to work eastwards and southwards, thence to the island of Kishm, 450 miles distant, at the mouth of the Gulf. The hot weather, when no man may work, was already rapidly approaching; and as soon as the *Perseus* appeared at Maskat to relieve the *Sphinx*, we got away at once for the fulfilment of the above fairly "tall" orders, and arrived off the bar of the river on April 28th. A buoy is moored to mark the position of the bar, and we anchored near it. The land, which was twenty miles distant, is very low, so that there could be seen of it only a dim outline of miraged date-palms, where the village and fort of Fao stand at the actual river-mouth. We were not anxious that our presence should be known, and did nothing, therefore, in the way of saluting the Turkish flag, or even of appearing within sight of the fort, as, normally, would have been polite and necessary.

Instead, we sailed early next morning, eastwards towards Bushire, the first harbour of any importance on the Persian coast, but with intention of "taking a look around" *en route* at a somewhat enigmatic inlet twenty-five miles eastward of Shatt-al-Arab, named on the chart as "Kher Musa."

The word "khor" stands in Arabic for a long and narrow creek leading in from the sea. Fissures of this nature are a fairly frequent geological feature of the shores of the Gulf. This khor was shown on the chart in "pecked line"—a symbol indicating vagueness

and want of knowledge generally,—but its course was indicated as a wide straight channel five miles long, which then forked into two narrow and divergent gulleys, fading into "nothing." It was not, from the chart, a very hopeful spot, and the surrounding country was stated to be "morass, covered with reeds." Nothing but a sheer sense of duty took me into it. Nor was Kemp, Captain of the *Sphinx*, at all enthusiastic about crossing the sand-bar, for it was shown as having over it only fifteen feet of water; and this might have been much less for all the chart knew! However, he got the old ship over it safely, and soon we were paddling along happily in deep water up the straight channel until we arrived at the spot where the khor forked off into two smaller channels, and here we anchored in eleven fathoms. I had by now begun to feel considerably more interested in the place; for, instead of the five-mile length given to the khor on the chart, we had already penetrated northward for nearly nineteen miles in from the sea! The water was still quite deep, and the two diverging arms could be seen stretching away before us for a great distance—one to the north-eastward and one to the westward. We seemed to have hit on a "soft thing" at the very beginning of our investigation!

The scene was a strange one. It was half-tide; and, at the level of our eyes there stretched on all sides of us a brown sandy plain, flat, smooth, devoid of life, reaching everywhere to the horizon, except at one point to the north-eastward, where at a great distance a shadowy mountain range lay faintly quivering against the pale hot sky. The tide rose; and when, at the top of high-water, we looked forth, behold, we were at sea once more! The vast sandy plain had all disappeared under a skin of water, which, oceanic as it seemed, was in reality only a few inches deep. Every indication of the two wide channels had disappeared, and no landmark was left but a tiny islet, close to the ship, on which some one had built a cairn of stones. The tide turned; and, as it fell, the dry land gradually appeared, as it may have done on Ararat what time the Ark grounded, and the courses of the khors slowly became more and more clearly indicated, until, at low water, there lay the *Sphinx*, in the stream-way of a great channel, flanked by firm steep banks, with the ship's hull sunk to a depth of ten feet below the flat land surface. The cairned islet had now become an inland hillock, inhabited by sea-birds. It was spring-time, and they were hospitably engaged in providing us with eggs for that, and for many subsequent breakfasts. They never wearied in well-doing, and were a great support to the expedition throughout our stay.

From these tidal experiences

we realised that it would be necessary to explore while the water was low enough to let us see the banks of the khors, so as to indicate to us their shape, and the direction in which we should steer. At high tide we should have been obliged blindly to grope our way over the surface of what was apparently an inland sea, seeking with sounding-lead and line for the deep channels. Accordingly, seizing a proper moment, we set forth for a preliminary exploration in the *Sphinx*'s steam cutter, towing a light skiff astern in case of accidents. Equipped with sextant, chronometer, compass, and sounding-machine, not to mention lunch, we felt equal to any emergency. It was a day of amazement. The north-eastward khor, which was the first to be examined, led us first for five miles to the north-east, and then for fifteen miles more to the eastward, up into the heart, as it seemed to us, of the province of Khuzistan. The average width between the banks was half a mile; the depths in the middle of the khor extraordinarily great—namely, between twenty-five and forty fathoms. At the point where, on that first day, we stopped in the boat, we still could see the main khor stretching away in fascination before us, all unknown, untravelled. On our left hand a subsidiary khor, coming from the westward, joined the one in which we were anchored in the boat, while on our right a great shoal lagoon spread out, glistening for miles in the setting sun. Ahead of us, at apparently about five miles distance, we could see a little village, ringed round with date-palms, the course of the waterway leading to which was indicated by the masts of "dhows," large native boats, whose hulls lay out of sight, grounded at various positions along the khor. These were the first indications of human life that we had beheld. We sounded with lead-and-line from the boat all round our position, and found that there was good anchorage water for the *Sphinx*. We determined, therefore, to take the ship up there next day, and stuck a couple of poles we had brought with us into the soft sandy mud of the bank abreast, in order to mark the best position in which to moor.

The following morning, at low water, we paddled her up, and anchored her in this spot, thirty-five miles in from the open sea. This gave us a new point from which to explore; and presently the steam cutter, with her attendant skiff, were got alongside the gangway, to be loaded with my surveying instruments. Gum-boots and boat-hook staves were added to the equipment, by the aid of which the steep banks of soft mud might be climbed; for we had quite made up our minds to land and visit the village. The khor, we now discovered as we ran up it in the boat, went on for another five miles, tapering and shoaling, until it ended in a muddy trickle. Several branches ran inland from its

left bank, and near the mouth of one of them we passed a boat with a man in it. Him we hailed, and Abdullah, the ship's interpreter, found out from him the best point at which to land in order to reach the village, the name of which, he said, was Mashúr. The khor in which was his boat was the one which led to Mashúr; but it was now dry, and even at high-water it would scarcely have been deep enough to carry the steam-cutter to its head. There was six feet of soft and sticky bank, and up this it was necessary to drag ourselves in our gum-boots, using our boat-hooks as alpenstocks, in order to reach the path to the village on the hard ground on the top. The unshaded sun was pouring down on us, and there can seldom have been a trio of adventurers of a more degraded appearance than Kemp, Abdullah, and myself, when at last we were ready to start on the two-mile march to Mashúr. Our sun-helmets, our white uniforms and gum-boots, were daubed heavily and disgustingly with mud; our scarlet faces rained down with muddy perspiration, and we each still bore our long mud-clogged staves, to aid us in case of need when crossing further creeks on the line of march. We were absolute mud-larks! There was no possible means of "tidying-up," so we set forth at once for the little village. Being May, it was the time of barley harvest, and we passed many people out at the reaping. As we approached the causeway leading to the village gate, there were women coming out with pitchers to draw water from the little rain-filled reservoirs among the date-palms. They gazed at us for a horrified moment; then, setting down their burdens, they fled back home in an anguish of amazement at our appearance, possibly mingled —and, if so, very justifiably— with amusement!

While we were *en route* Abdullah had induced one of the reapers to leave his work and to go before us to proclaim our arrival to the authorities; and now, as we entered at the gate, our messenger appeared, to lead us to the house of the Sheikh. We were conducted into a humble mud-walled vestibule, half open to the sky, half thatched, cool and shady, and bidden to sit down on a daís at one end. Before us sat the Sheikh, amid a group of village fathers, who received us with the grave inborn politeness of a thousand generations of disciplined good manners. We were handed tumblers made of thick green glass, and an attendant filled them, from a leathern bottle, with cool, exquisitely cool, rain-water. In our overwhelming drought we drank, regardless of microbes; but if any existed in the potion, our personal temperatures, which seemed to be many degrees above boiling-point, must have sufficiently sterilised the liquid as it hissed down our throats. No ill effect, anyway, was caused by it.

Our position was, in many

respects, a delicate one. The name of "Mashúr" was well known to the gunboat officers of the Gulf as that of the base of the constant petty piracies which took place, unpunished, in the northern end of it; but of its actual whereabouts no one knew, or at least no one would tell. The name was entered on the chart, it is true, but it was placed fifty miles, and more, to the eastward of its true position, and was carefully marked with a large ? Khor Musa had now rendered up to us the long-guarded secret. Anything less like pirate chiefs than these grave polite old men now confronting us can scarcely be imagined, surprised, as they had been, in their lair by their remorseless, but now entirely defenceless hunters. Yet not the slightest resentment was shown. We were guests; and it was the will of Allah that we should discover them—therefore, useless to oppose it. Courteous compliments were exchanged, local information asked and given; and finally, on hearing from the Sheikh that there was a river close at hand, which discharged its waters into Khor Musa, nearly abreast of the new anchorage of the *Sphinx*, we asked if he could provide us with a pilot to take us, in the steam-cutter, up it. In a few moments there arose one of the greybeards, who declared himself to be pilot to the Sheikh of Mohammerah—the chief Sheikh of the whole district—and that he would take us for twenty rupees. This was the final coal of fire on our head, and we rose to go back to the boat. Coffee of an admirable flavour, but thick with sweetness, in the Arab fashion, had followed the draught of water; and now the parting guest must be politely speeded on his way. The Sheikh sent for, and presently a mule and a donkey were brought, the sole available beasts of burden in the village, and by taking turns in the saddle, we four,—for Hajji Gulim Shah, the pilot, came with us,—having reached the steam-cutter just at sunset, got back to the ship before complete darkness had set in.

The expedition up the new river, which was named Khor Dorak, was arranged for a day later—and took place under the most fortunate circumstances. We chanced to have hit upon the day of spring-tides, and thus we started off in the steam-cutter on the first of the flood stream at 6 A.M., were carried up on its wave by noon to the head of navigation, thirty-five miles inland to the westward, where was a village named Beziya, stayed there an hour, and returned to the ship by 7 P.M., swiftly and easily, on the ebb stream. Under no other tidal conditions could we have carried out such a programme, though it was impossible for us to have known this beforehand. We should have had to wait a fortnight for another similar day.

In one way, this river was our most important find in connection with Khor Musa. If the khor ever was to be

a "base," either for ourselves or for any other Power, a good supply of fresh water was a primary essential. It would be a necessity anywhere; but how much more so in the arid and nearly rainless Persian Gulf?

Hitherto, we had found the water of the khor to be of the most bitterly salt character, having nearly twice the salinity of the open ocean; and the lack of fresh water, I could not but feel, was a severe handicap on the value of the discovery of this otherwise possible base for small craft.

But as we steamed up Khor Dorak, and every few miles tested the water for density, I found, to my great satisfaction, that first it was becoming less and less salt, then less and less brackish, until finally, at about fifteen miles from the mouth, it was quite fresh. The scenery changed with the saltness. The dreary sandy plain, fronted by tidal mud-flats, gave way, as we steamed inland, before the soft influence of the fresh water. At ten miles from Khor Musa coarse bamboo-grass began to fringe the banks, while the strip of pasture-land on both sides behind them became wider and wider, richer and richer, until it spread out, green and far, to the flat horizon, and was dotted with cattle and sheep. After twenty miles, villages and date-palm groves began to appear on both sides, whence stupefied men and a myriad of half-terrified children came out to view the first steam vehicle of their lives, unable to decide whether it was Jinn or Afrit, but hoping for the best!

At last our waterway narrowed into a small stream ten yards wide, and finally we were brought up by a small bridge thrown across it at the village of Beziya. Here we landed, and while Abdullah bought fowls for us at a shilling apiece, and five fat sheep at twelve shillings each (O happy uncontrolled land!), I got observations of the sun to find out our geographical position. When the ebb stream began, we started home with it; and as we went back, checked the running survey of the river I had made on the way up, getting more sun-observations for longitude when the conditions were propitious. Not far from the spot where Khor Dorak opened into Khor Musa there was a sand-bar, which we had just, but only just, negotiated in the steam-cutter on the way up. The boat was then drawing $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet; but on the return journey, with our marketings at Beziya making a considerable extra cargo, several further inches had been added to our draught. It was getting dusk when we reached this point, and the old pilot was squatting in the bows, directing our course with solemn authoritative wavings of the right hand or of the left. Presently he gave quiet utterance to a short remark. Abdullah translated: "The pilot says,

sir, that he thinks it is too late to cross the bar; the water has already fallen too low." And, just as he said this, we grounded. The skiff was hauled swiftly up alongside, and every available sheep and weight, living and dead, was cast into her. In the steam-cutter every one seized oars and boat-hooks, and shoved hard, but the heavy deep-keeled boat remained with bows buried in the sticky ground, as unmoved as was the old pilot himself. There he sat, calm, imperturbable, amidst our activities, and our, to him, undignified anxieties, merely pointing out the best direction in which to push, in order most quickly to reach deeper water. "Ask Hajji Gulim," I said to Abdullah, "if he thinks there is any chance of our getting off to-night, or if we shall have to wait for the morning tide."

A few grave words fell from the pilot's lips in reply. "He says, sir," says Abdullah, "that it is as God wills." This was serious. On hearing it, Abdullah—a portly person—was ordered into the skiff. She was already crammed with panting sheep and terrified fowls, but he managed to find foot-room. "One, two, three—*shove*." We shoved feverishly: it was now or never! The steam-cutter withdrew her bows, grudgingly, a few inches. "Again so!"—and she floated, touched, floated, touched—the ebb-stream carrying her gently down meanwhile, until at last she was over the bar and in deep water! The skiff rejoined us, and we were back on board the *Sphinx* within an hour.

On the next day, when it came to paying-off the old pilot, before sending him home to Mashúr, it appeared that he was considerably more sophisticated than we had previously supposed (probably from intercourse with the steamer world of men dealing at Mohammerah and Basra), and that he was completely aware of the fact that the Western seafaring man in the hands of the Eastern bargainer is as wet clay in the hands of the potter. He moulded us, therefore, according to his will; that is to say, he squeezed an extra ten rupees out of his helpless employers, and left, declaring that "he had never before met naval officers like unto ourselves"—an enigmatic utterance the purport of which I am not, even now, quite clear.

Having thus explored the N.E. branch of Khor Musa and its offshoots, we now took the *Sphinx* back down again to our first anchorage—*i.e.*, the spot where the original main channel forked into two parts, in order, from there, to examine the western-going branch. After a short pioneering visit in the steam-cutter, we moved the ship up this new channel for a distance of five miles, and anchored her there in seven fathoms. It was considerably narrower and less deep than the other khor, but still quite a good anchorage for small vessels. From the new anchorage we went

on, for a further twenty miles, in the steam-cutter to the westward. The khor ended here in a muddy *cul-de-sac*, into which fell several small streams of fresh water, none of them large enough, however, to affect the salinity of the khor water to any marked degree. There were no inhabitants nor cattle to be seen; but it was evident that, once upon a time, the surrounding land had been lived on by men, for traces of irrigation channels, now wrecked and fallen in, could be seen in all directions. Up at the head of the khor several wild pigs, outcasts of Arabia, could be seen rooting and wallowing in the mud of the streams. They looked at us in dismay, and rushed noisily away. On the return journey we met a native boat which had got into the khor through a branch channel, having come by a devious route from the Bahmishir river, some miles to the westward. The men in it told us that the khor was named "Bukhader," and that it had been, one hundred and seventy years ago, an outlet of running water from the Karún river, but that it had gradually silted up; and the villages which formerly had existed along the banks had disappeared as the water became more and more salt.

We had a curious experience during this exploration. As we steamed up the khor, I was looking out for a place at which to land to get sun-observations for longitude, when I saw, a short way ahead of the boat, and close to the water's edge, a sandy cliff, apparently ten or twelve feet high, with some flat ground in front of it. In the face of the cliff was a row of caves, high enough at their entrances for a man to stand upright; and they were barricaded, each of them, with boughs of brushwood. On the flat top of the cliff into which they had been scooped stood a few low tree-trunks, cut "short off." Kemp, who was accompanying me as usual, was as much interested and surprised as myself. This was, to him as to me, quite a new type of Arab habitation; and we decided to land at the spot, to visit the troglodyte dwellings, and examine the unusual vegetation. As we approached in the boat, we were rather surprised to find that the caves seemed somewhat smaller than we had at first supposed; but we landed abreast, and walked up to them. On reaching them, we looked at one another in blank and even creepy dismay! It was as if we both had fallen under the spell of some ancient Arabian necromancer! For the "cliff" had become only twelve inches high; the "caves" were mere holes burrowed into them by some sea-bird; the "barricades of boughs" turned out to be a few little brushwood sticks laid in the mouth of the holes in the form of a nest; and the "tree-trunks" on top were but the broken stalks of a scrubby plant, a few inches high, that covered the surrounding wilderness! We walked backwards from the spot, and as we did so magni-

fication and mystification began anew. At twenty yards objects were already three to four times their proper size, and at one hundred yards they were ten times enlarged. I can only leave it at that, humbly supposing the effect to be due to some peculiarity of refraction, through the dry and uniformly heated air. The same thing occurred farther up the khor; for the wild-pig we saw on the bank seemed from the boat to be as large as bullocks—creatures of nightmare, with snouts like crocodiles', and with a mane of bristles on their shoulders, shaggy and great, almost, as a bison's. Probably they would have diminished into ordinary lean little pigs had we been able to get near them. Distance, on this occasion, certainly lent enchantment to the view!

The exploration of Khor Bukhader ended, we felt we ought to be moving on. We had already spent a whole fortnight over this one harbour; the weather was getting hotter every day, and there was still the whole coast of Persia to be examined. I felt, however, that the importance of the discovery of this wonderful deep-water anchorage, far inland, entirely protected from attack from seaward, and having an abundant fresh-water supply, easily available by pipe-line or otherwise, fully warranted the expenditure of time I had given it. It was, I felt convinced, the only harbour in Persia endowed with so many possibilities; and the good luck in hitting on it could scarcely be repeated throughout the much better-known coast-line that stretched for over four hundred miles southward before me.

The gilt was off the gingerbread at the first mouthful, yet the rest of the cake remained to be eaten, and accordingly we set forth in the little *Sphinx* next morning, skirting the wide sandy shoals that preclude all approach by ships to the north-eastern part of the head of the Gulf, and so came to Bushire, where we had to make a short stay, in order to get mails, coals, stores, and provisions.

(To be continued.)

OPPOSITES.

BY J. A. STRAHAN.

On the afternoon of May the 1st I was writing some letters in the drawing-room of my club, when my attention was diverted from my work by the sound of drums without, as is said in Shakespeare's plays. The drumming was so loud that, but for its want of skill, it might have suggested that the massed bands of the Household Brigade were marching past the club-house. I went on the balcony to see what all the noise was about. A long procession of men, women, and children, interspersed with bodies of vigorous if not very musical musicians, was slowly winding its way along Pall Mall towards Hyde Park. I was told, what I should have known, that it represented London's contribution to the May Day International Festival of Labour.

With some other members of the club I remained a little time on the balcony watching the procession drag its slow length along. All the men, women, and children who walked or rode in it wore red rosettes, and many of them carried red banners; without exception they were well dressed and well fed, and few of them appeared to belong to the class of manual labourers; and many of them had features and a complexion which recalled not so much an English as an Eastern clime. Some of them as they passed the clubs—which, no doubt, were associated in their mind with aristocratic indolence and luxury beyond the dreams of opulence — shook their red banners menacingly, and glaring up at the grey-haired thin-faced members on the balcony, called out, "Are we Bolshevics? We are." Not unfrequently the accent reminded me of Whitechapel.

From time to time the procession came to a dead stop, so frequently indeed as to suggest that neither the marchers nor the organisers of the march had seen much service in the late war. It was during one of these stops that an incident occurred which surprised some of us: a detachment of this procession of Englishmen began in the middle of Waterloo Place to sing an anti-English song, "God save Ireland." Moreover, it was received by the English processionists with applause: the English spectators of the procession maintained a silence which could be heard.

This anti-English demonstration in the centre of the capital of England was applauded by the English processionists. I wonder what would happen to men who, in an Irish procession, made an anti-Irish demonstration in the centre of the capital of Ireland? Well, perhaps it is not neces-

sary to wonder: only a few weeks ago a party of the King's soldiers was stoned in Dublin for singing "God save the King."

This incident put me on inquiry, as the lawyers say. I was already fairly familiar with the views of the revolutionaries in Ireland, and a short investigation soon enlightened me as to the views of the revolutionaries in England. In some respects they are as opposite as the poles. In Ireland the revolutionary party is nationalist and communist; in England communist and anti-nationalist. This I cannot but think is a comforting fact, for it ensures in the end the defeat of both parties. In my opinion the association of anti-nationalism with revolutionary communism in England must sooner or later result in the repudiation of communism, as the bulk of Englishmen loathe anti-nationalism; and the association of communism with revolutionary nationalism in Ireland must sooner or later result in the repudiation of nationalism, as the bulk of Irishmen loathe communism. Each movement thus carries within itself the poison which will ultimately cause its dissolution.

You have only to read one of his papers, or listen to one of his orators, to discover that the English revolutionary is scarcely so much Bolshevist as anti-British. Indeed, his leaders, if they were candid, might proclaim, as Mr de Valera, the leader of the Sinn Feiners, does, that every enemy of England is a friend of theirs. Whatever mishap or dispute occurs in any part of the world, the villain of the piece is, in their eyes, always either an Englishman or an ally of England. The unpunished murders of policemen in Ireland, and the abandonment of Ulstermen to the tender mercies of the murderers, are regarded by them with indifference, because both policemen and Ulstermen are loyal to their country; but when a suspected Sinn Feiner is executed by suspicious Sein Feiners, they eagerly accept the lie of the disloyalists that he was murdered by the police; and when a disloyalist suspected, or even convicted of outrage or crime, threatens to commit suicide by self-starvation in prison, they shed enough tears over English brutality to float a ship. And it is the same wherever there exists disloyalty or disturbance in the Empire: it is a crime on the part of an Englishman to protect himself, or to preserve the peace. A louder lamentation has been raised by them over the riots at Amritsar than they ever raised over the desolation of Louvain. The one point which, strange to say, I have found none of them drawing any attention to in that connection, is that of the five men on whom the Indian nationalists are calling down vengeance, at least three are Irishmen—General Dyer, the principal villain, Sir Michael O'Dwyer, and Colonel O'Brien.

Now the difficult thing to explain is how this anti-English feeling arose: there seems no necessary antipathy between love of one's own country and the cherishing of advanced opinions as to the mode in which it should be governed, or in which its property should be owned. The French Revolutionists of the eighteenth century held as advanced views on these points as do our British Bolshevics, but they were above all and everything devoted to La France. I can understand the internationalism of the Bolshevics abroad, for they are to a large extent under the leadership of Jews and the influence of Jewish thought.

So far as the lower-class Jew, at any rate, is concerned, his nationality is not territorial, but tribal: not loyalty to the State in which he lives, but loyalty to a race which lives in many States. When, then, he ceases to regard himself as one of the chosen people, he is apt to regard himself as a citizen of the world. It is only natural, then, that a movement largely directed by denationalised lower-class Jews should be international in its character.

The sympathy then between the English and Continental Communists might account for a leaning among the former towards internationalism; but it cannot account for their leaning towards anti-nationalism. I myself think that the cause of that leaning must be found in the influence which, since the time of Fergus O'Connor, the Irish Celt has wielded over all advanced movements in Great Britain.

Though unlike the Jew in the fact that the Celtic Irishman has a country of his own, the nationalism of the Irish workman and peasant is still, like that of the lower-class Jew, tribal in its character: it consists not of loyalty to the land in which he lives, but in loyalty to the race from which he springs. That race, like the Jewish, is now scattered over a large part of the world, and it so happens that the part of the world over which it is scattered is chiefly inhabited by a people alien in blood and religion from it. In the eighteenth century it was otherwise. Then such emigration as there was from Celtic Ireland was to Latin and Catholic countries,—France, Spain, and South America,—and in these congenial communities the Irish emigrant was soon absorbed in the general population. The famous Irish Brigade in the service of France, though repeatedly reinforced by "wild geese" from the shores of Clare and Kerry, had by the time of the French Revolution practically not a man in it who called himself Irish, save a few of the officers, who remembered their confiscated lands in Ireland, and hoped vaguely some day to regain them. In the nineteenth century the tremendous emigration from Celtic Ireland

was on the other hand almost exclusively to Anglo-Saxon and Protestant countries—Great Britain, North America, and Australia. In these countries the Irish emigrant has not been absorbed in the general population. He lives in his own districts, does not intermarry with his neighbours, and continues to cherish the religion, traditions, and prejudices of his race. One of his traditions is that his race was robbed and oppressed by the upper classes, and this inclines him to join all movements directed against aristocracy and wealth; and one of his prejudices is a hereditary hatred of England and everything English, and this inclines him to use all his influence over every movement which he joins to give it an anti-British bias, whether that movement is in a foreign State or a British colony or in Great Britain herself.

It is this which makes the Celtic Irishman a bad citizen wherever he goes. An Englishman, or Scotsman, or Ulsterman, all of whom are primarily what I may call territorial nationalists, when he leaves his old home and settles in a new one, though he still retains an unforgettable affection for the land of his birth, recognises that his first duty is to the land of his adoption. He identifies himself with it, and often he himself and always his descendants become indistinguishable in opinions and feelings from their neighbours. But the Celtic Irishman and his children, even to the third and fourth generations, continue Celtic Irishmen, entertaining the same memories of an evil past, and the same hatreds which those memories engender, and constantly intriguing to gratify those hatreds rather than thinking of the interests of their new home. It is this which led them in an English procession having nothing to do with Ireland to sing an anti-English song, and it is this which leads them at present to endeavour to embitter the relations between England and her eldest daughter, the United States of America. The Anglo-Saxon, whether living at home or in America, is, as Lord Morris said, a long-suffering race; but there is a limit even to its endurance. When the Irish contingent on May Day sang that anti-English song, the English spectators, as I have said, heard it in silence; but when anti-English demonstrations before Wormwood Scrubbs Prison became nightly ceremonies, they grew tired and quickly put an end to them. And I have a doubt whether the Americans will tolerate their practices in the United States much longer. It is not such a long time since severe measures—sometimes perhaps over severe—were taken in that country against what were called hyphenated American citizens. These were the citizens of German origin who, in the interest of Germany, tried to keep America at peace. Is the citizen of Irish origin less objectionably hy-

phenated who in the interest of Ireland tries to involve her in war?

This is my explanation of the origin of the anti-nationalist bias of the English revolutionary party. Whether right or wrong, that bias will always prevent that party from ever having any considerable following in Great Britain. The average Englishman, however discontented he may be with his government or his circumstances, is always at heart proud of the greatness of his country and the glory of her past; and he will never support a party, whatever its objects, which habitually reviles her. Already not merely the revolutionaries but the moderate Labourites have reason to remember this. Six months ago the working men, disappointed with the delay in the advent of that new heaven and new earth which had been promised them to follow the end of the war, were turning from Lloyd George to the Labour party to hasten it. In election after election Labour candidates towered over their Coalition and Liberal opponents by thousands of votes. The revolutionary party saw clear the arrival of a Bolshevist British Republic. Meanwhile British soldiers and police were being murdered in scores in Ireland, Egypt, and India, for being Britishers and doing their duty to Britain; and the revolutionaries' only comment was that we must give the murderers whatever they chose to ask. The working men thereupon began to think, and the results of the last half-dozen elections show the direction which their thoughts are taking.

In Ireland the revolutionary party is on the other hand intensely nationalist. Its goal is what has been the goal of all Nationalists, at any rate of the peasant and working classes, at all times—the independence of Ireland. Now, while there is no necessary antipathy between nationalism and communism, there is equally no necessary sympathy between them. And, indeed, for a long time the nationalist and the communistic revolutionary movements in the country ran in completely separate channels. The history of their union is somewhat interesting.

The revolutionary Nationalist party consisted originally of a number of amiable enthusiasts who dreamt of making Irish the language of the people and the people an independent nation. Their chief efforts to fulfil these dreams, so far as I could see, consisted in putting up the names of streets in Irish, which the people could not read, with a translation into English which the people could read, and stamping their letters with the King's head turned upside down. Its leaders consisted of some writers and scholars who produced many literary works in support of the Irish language and Irish revolution, which were often learned, but seldom literature and never dangerous. This was the commencement of the now ferocious conspiracy known to the world as the League of Sinn Feiners.

Alongside this innocent movement there was another of a very different character. Its leader was called Jim Larkin. He was probably an Irishman by birth,—his enemies, who were numerous, asserted that he was the son of James Carey, the betrayer of the infamous Invincibles, but this seems without foundation,—and he professed to be a Nationalist in politics, but in practice he was an internationalist, at least as much at home in England, Scotland, or America as in Ireland. He may be described as a pre-Bolshevic Bolshevic. His object was to destroy society as at present constituted all the world over, and create a new society of the proletariat. At present he is, I believe, in jail on a conviction of criminal conspiracy to do this in the United States.

He came to Dublin to organise the Irish Transport Union, and he accomplished his work with such energy and skill that he was soon able, by a general strike, to paralyse all the city's commercial and manufacturing activity. When more moderate men pointed out to him that he was destroying the trade of Dublin, his only answer was, "Damn the trade of Dublin!" He made it clear he was not a mere trades unionist out to improve the condition of working men, but a revolutionary out to set up a commune. In this he received the enthusiastic support of the Dublin labourers.

However, the strike did not in the end greatly benefit the strikers, and after it ended he found it convenient to leave Dublin. His place was taken by a far abler man, James Connolly. Connolly was as strong a communist as Larkin, but he was also a practical Sinn Feiner, who put the independence of Ireland even before the establishment of a commune. He laid his plans to fuse the two movements, and he succeeded in carrying out his plans. How he contrived to do so I cannot tell.

Henceforth James Connolly was the real head of both the communistic Transport Unionists and the nationalist Sinn Feiners, and he was this by reason of the fact that he had the only practical intellect among their leaders. He set about openly organising and arming them for rebellion. The only difference discussed in their numerous newspapers or at Liberty Hall was as to the date of the outbreak. England was then engaged in her life-and-death struggle with Germany. One party, consisting chiefly of Transport Unionists, and supported by James Connolly, on the principle that England's difficulty is Ireland's opportunity, was eager for an immediate rising. The other party, consisting chiefly of Sinn Feiners, urged that the rising should be postponed till England was definitely worsted in the war. This difference between them was very hotly debated and never really settled.

The combined movement had at this time comparatively

small support from the public. Unionists, whether workmen or employers, hated it because it was Nationalist; merchants and farmers, whether Unionist or Nationalist, abhorred it because it was communist; and these classes between them constituted three-fourths of the population of Ireland. If the Chief Secretary had been a man of energy and determination, the whole movement might have been suppressed with little trouble and with almost universal approval; but the Chief Secretary was Mr Augustine Birrell, who was so weak that he could not be resolute even against the Unionists. He let things drift till the almost invited insurrection came, and the capital of Ireland was in the hands of the rebels. I am told that when the news of this calamity was brought to him, Mr Birrell was asleep in an armchair in a certain London club. We have heard much of the destruction of life at Amritsar. I wonder how many more lives have been lost through Mr Birrell's feebleness than through General Dyer's fierceness. And how many more will yet be lost!

James Connolly was tried by court-martial for treason and executed. He had been the leader of the party which favoured early rebellion, and the rebellion had failed. Yet the rebellion made the fortune of his party. It alleged, with some show of reason, that the failure of the rebellion was due to the hesitation and half-heartedness of its opponents within the movement and the opposition of the Home Rulers without it, and Celtic Ireland believed it. Henceforth, whatever crimes this party might commit, it was disloyalty to Ireland to denounce the criminals, and absolute treason to Ireland to inform against them.

This revulsion of feeling in favour of the party of action, in what has now come to be called the Sinn Fein movement, had two effects on its composition which were of the utmost importance. In the first place, it induced multitudes of enthusiastic young Nationalist farmers and merchants to join it in spite of its communist tend. This improved the intelligence of the party and supplied it with ample funds and arms, for never were these so plentiful in Ireland as they are to-day. In the second place, it attached to the active party those ancient predatory secret societies which identified its communist objects with their own. These societies date from the terrible days of the eighteenth century, when half the people of Celtic Ireland had never enough to eat, and those who had nothing formed themselves into organisations to rob from those who had. In quiet times they sink to impotence, but when political trouble comes their power revives and their membership increases, and they, by acting as if they were rebels, are enabled to act as what they really are—robbers.

This combination of par-

ties in a movement to overthrow English government in Ireland seems formidable enough, and so, sure enough, it is at present; and yet it is just this combination which, it seems to me, will, if we have a little patience, lead to the defeat of the movement. Men with land of their own and a comfortable balance at their bank cannot act very cheerfully with men without either, and one of whose objects is to share both; and honest men cannot act very long with men who are out for pillage. Fear of the vengeance which would follow secession from their ranks has so far kept the different parties together; but already we hear of cases where stolen money has been restored and the thieves tried by the Sinn Fein courts and punished. When a thief is forbidden to rob, he can always turn informer.

Besides, the bulk of Celtic Irishmen are now small farmers, usually owning their own farms and in a comfortable way of business: such men have no use for communism. Without their support no movement, political or social, in Ireland can live; and once the present fever subsides a little, I think we may expect most of them to look with great coldness on any movement, whatever else its object, which threatens the security of their possessions. At this moment I have reason to believe many of them are coerced into the acceptance of rebel rule only by terrorism, and for the existence of that terrorism not they, but the blunders and feebleness of the government, are primarily responsible. When that terrorism has been dethroned, then we shall have an Ireland which, if not loyal, will be at least peaceful, and, having seen the risks that revolution brings with it, even in a way contented.

FROM THE OUTPOSTS.

A DEBT.

"YOUR Honour," said the Inspector of Police, "there are two jungly men from over the Administrative Line brought in this morning by a military policeman from the frontier blockhouse. They walked straight up to the post in the middle of the day carrying arms. They made no attempt at concealment, and when they were asked what they wanted they said they had a communication to make to Government. They were told that according to standing orders they must deposit their arms. They said they could not give up their guns, and were informed that unless they did they could not be allowed to go on. So they went back over the frontier stream and sat talking with one another for some time. Then two of them came back walking through the water, and said their business was very important and that they wanted to see you. They mentioned you by name—Kako, which is the way all the people about here pronounce your Honour's name, as your Honour knows."

"Did they say what they wanted?" asked Captain Kirkwood. "I make a point of seeing all these people, but I like to know what they have come about first."

"No, they did not say. It is not a cattle-stealing case, that is quite evident. But unfortunately the clerk at the blockhouse was away at the village buying chickens, or tobacco, or something, and none of the sepoys can write and not many of them can talk Burmese, let alone the language of these people, your Honour. All that the military policeman can say is that the men said it was very *suruti*, very urgent. The two men were allowed to come on after they had deposited their guns and *dhas*, and the rest are camped in leaf shelters on the other side of the river, waiting for them to come back. I questioned them at the police station, but all they say is that they are headmen of villages, and that they beg that they may be allowed to approach your Honour. One of them asserts that your Honour knows him very well, but according to custom he will not give his name."

"Knows me quite well! I wonder who he is. Well, let them come in—and, if they stay a long time, come in and say that it is time to go to the court-house."

The Inspector salaamed and went out, and a few minutes afterwards two wiry-looking men in short waist-cloths, barely coming to the knee, padded coats, and turbans consisting of a dingy wisp of cloth wound round their knotted

hair, were ushered in by the chuprassi. Both of them put their right hands up with the palm over the ear. This was their notion of a British salute, and did not mean that they were hard of hearing or had earache.

Captain Kirkwood recognised the first of them immediately. "Hallo, *duwa*, what's brought you here? I haven't been able to get up to your village for a long time now. We're very busy. Any *serao* about now? or sambhur? I should like to come up again for another shoot, but it can't be done just now."

"I do not know about the deer, *thakin*. It is not that. We have heard that you have a war, that the Great Royal Government is punishing some disorderly Germans. That is why we have come."

Captain Kirkwood checked himself in an inclination to laugh. "What? You haven't come to enlist, have you? I am afraid there is no room for more men in the Kachin Company. It's full up. In fact there is a good long waiting list, and anyhow there is no chance of service for them, or for me, worse luck. The company won't be moved from here unless there are local troubles."

"It is not that, Great Lord," said the chief eagerly. "But we have heard that the Germans, who are a race of dacoits, thieves, robbers, and murderers, have made a raid into the territory of the Great Lord, and are stealing much property and doing much mischief. We have some experience in that sort of thing, and therefore we have come to offer arms to the Great Royal Government, so that the Germans may be quickly defeated and exterminated."

"Arms!" said Captain Kirkwood. "Do you mean weapons, or do you mean a band of the young men of your village? We can't take them just now."

"No, Great Lord, but we have heard from Chinese caravans passing along the valley road, the road your Lordship knows very well, that the Germans have great supplies of weapons, and that they have been violently resisting the troops of the Great Royal Government. Therefore we have brought arms to offer to the Great Royal Government through your Lordship. But the people at the frontier fort did not understand. They told us that no one with arms may pass along the roads. We knew that very well, but we put it down to their ignorance of our virtuous intentions. Therefore my subjects have gone back across the frontier, and have taken the guns with them; but the arms are there beyond dispute. Then I and the *pawmaing*, the little *duwa* of the village on the northern slope, came with all possible haste to inform your Lordship of our purpose and of the circumstances. We ask you, Great Lord, to issue orders that the weapons shall be brought along here, so that the Royal Government troops may utterly destroy the Germans."

Captain Kirkwood felt inclined to laugh, but he had considerable experience of Kachin sensitiveness, so he remarked gravely, "That is very patriotic of you. But what do you know of the Germans? Have you a blood-feud with them?"

"Have we not a blood-feud? The whole village has a debt against them, and there are many villagers who have special private debts. Does your Lordship know the German Maya (Meier)? You must know him. He stayed at our village shortly after the time when your Lordship came up to inquire into the disturbances which had occurred in the Pumshih village over the closing of the forests and the stopping of the cutting of trees and bamboos. You remember that after you had finished your inquiry you came over the Administrative Line to my place to shoot some of the forest creatures."

"Of course, I remember very well. Was he a short stout man with a yellow moustache, and a knapsack strapped on his back?"

"Yes, he was a man like that, but he was chiefly noted for his bad manners, for the way he took everything and paid for nothing, and for the evil way in which he spoke. Ah, but he was cunning. Just when we had determined to seize him and hand him over to the Royal Government, or to cut him down if he resisted," the *duwa* looked sideways at Kirkwood with something like a smirk on his face, "he disappeared, and he carried off with him Ja Taung, a girl who had many lovers in the village. We went after him, but we lost the tracks and it was not for many weeks afterwards that we heard that he had gone north and had sold Ja Taung as a slave, near the head-waters of the East river. Ja Taung's brother is one of the men who are waiting at the Fort with the guns for the Great Royal Government He wants to go on with his gun himself to fight the Germans and kill Maya. He has three notches on his bamboo staff marked against Maya."

"He kidnapped a girl, did he? But what else did he do? When he asked me for a passport, he said he was studying the history of the Kachins. I remember him now quite well," said Kirkwood.

"There was nothing that he did not do. He said he was studying all the races of the earth, and he specially wanted to find out about the ancient races on the frontier between China and Burma and their manners and customs. He had a man with him who spoke Chinese, and all the Kachins near the frontier can understand Chinese, so he was able to talk freely. This man of his was a bad man too. He had been a little teacher with the missionary whom your Lordship seized and sent away because he had been selling guns to the Chinese and others. They were not much use these guns, for they were all shove-behind guns, and when the supply of cartridges was done they could not be used any

more, because the people could not lead them the way our guns are loaded."

"I see. But there was not much harm in asking about the old legends of the Kachins. I often do that myself, and you have not got a blood-feud against me, have you?"

"It was the way he did it," said the *duwa* excitedly. "He was very insulting to the spirit men. He laughed at their stories and never took the trouble to write them down, whereas your Lordship always listens and makes notes in a book and very often says he has heard something of the same kind in other villages. But besides that, he was always wanting what he called specimens of our clothes, and he never would take old clothes. He always wanted new ones, and especially he wanted embroidered shoulder-bags. Now our women often go and sell these in the bazaar and get money to buy rice. But Maya never paid anything, not even for the food which the little teacher demanded for himself and for his master. I represented to him many times that this was not the Royal Government custom, neither was it the custom of our race. The Burmans used to do it in the Shan villages in the valleys, but even they did not demand to be fed free for more than ten days, and they never came to our villages in the hills. The Burmese were much too afraid of us for that. They were not fond of the hills. But Maya only laughed. He said he did not acknowledge the Great Royal Government. He belonged to another government which did not trouble itself about paltry things. He said he would give us a large present when he went away. And he talked much with Chinese smugglers who came over from Möngmyen to sell salt and buy opium, both of which are very profitable because they are illegal."

"Oh, he did that, did he? He was evidently a mean scoundrel. But what else did he do? How long did he stay? Your village is a fine village, *duwa*—sixty or seventy houses at least,—but it would not take him long to get all the stories he wanted and to buy all the new bags and clean clothes you had."

Kirkwood was convinced that there was more to be told yet.

"I don't know how long he stayed — a month, I should think." The *duwa* looked testily at his companion. "How long did he stay, *pawmaing?*"

The *pawmaing* hitched up his waist-cloth and began counting on his fingers: "Three times to the Na-lông bazaar he went, and four times to Kutkai bazaar. There are three days between them, and the bazaars are held every five days. He must have been over twenty-four or twenty-five days, because he did not go to Kutkai the first bazaar day, and he missed another because he had drunk too much *shiru* [millet beer] the night before. Twenty and five — and two or three days

when he first came — yes, it must have been twenty-nine or thirty days."

"What on earth did he do all that time? He must have been very fond of your village," said Kirkwood.

"He was always looking about for plants, and told us many times that we did not know the useful things we had in our country. He said he had found some wild tea-bushes, and he certainly made experiments with wild indigo that the Chinese dye their clothes with. And then he was away for two nights with a Chinese caravan that halted at Na-lông — and then there was the girl Ja Taung. He brought her presents from the bazaar: Berlin wool and condensed milk and ship tobacco and sardines and looking-glasses. And at night he always talked a great deal. At first he came to my house and sat in the front room with the little teacher, and smoked and drank and said many wicked things. Afterwards he went to other houses, and even to the bachelor huts."

"What do you mean, 'talked many wicked things'?" asked Kirkwood with sudden interest. He had been leaning back in his chair, listening resignedly to the *duwa's* dissertations. There had been a good deal of talk about unrest over the border in China and on the fringe of Tongking, but he had had no idea that German enterprise had gone so far as to talk sedition among the Kachins.

The headman looked at him queerly, and glanced sideways at the *pawmaing*, and checked his flow of talk. "I do not think that I should tell your Lordship. Your Lordship would be angry. But it was not our fault. We did not know what he was saying until the interpreter, the little teacher, told us. Then we could not stop him."

"Go on. Tell me the whole story. It is enough to show that you were not to blame that you have come to see me now. Tell me what it was the German said. You need not be afraid that it will annoy me or disturb me. You are more likely to get praise."

"You must remember, Great Lord, that as I have said before, this Maya always talked to us as if he were speaking to pariah dogs or buffaloes. He was a very rude man. He said always," the *duwa* hesitated for a moment,—"he said the Great Royal Government was a wicked government, and oppressed everybody with cannon that fire from very far away, and balls that break into pieces when they fall, and make as much noise then as when they are fired out of the gun. He said: You Kachins used to be lords of the hills. You used to make the valley people supply you with what you wanted, and they had to pay to be protected. Now the Great Royal Government will not let you fetch cattle when you need them, from villages which have more than is wanted, and they will not let you sell liquor and opium to

Burmans and Shans. And when you travel across the border they will not let you carry arms with you, you who have carried *dhas* since you were infants. They treat you just as if you were conquered, and you are not conquered. And they do more than that in the places where they stay and govern the people. They shut up the forests, and say you must not cut down trees and sow crops. If you do you will be punished. And when you have a quarrel with somebody who has done you some harm, they say you must not go and attack him, as a right-minded free man ought to do. They say you must go and bring a case in court. Do you know why they do that? It is because they want you to pay court fees. Gradually they will get all your money, and your young men will not know how to fight, and the English, they will come and take your lands just as they have taken the lands of the villages nearer the plains. And then you will all become slaves and will have to do whatever they bid you, and you will have to pay taxes, which is a thing not to be endured by people who have lived here since the mountains began. That is what the English do everywhere, he said. And that is why some day, he went on to say, perhaps soon, perhaps after a few years, the All-Highest Lord of my country is going to punish them and take their country from them. I know you cannot do much. You are poor wretched creatures who do not know how to fight properly, and have not got proper guns, and would not know how to use them if you had them. But if you are wise you will not allow the English Government people to come near you, and when my country people come to turn out the whole crew of them, you will make your petty small attacks on the English. You can't do much, of course. Nobody expects ignorant savages like you to do much, but you will distract the attention of the English and prevent them from sending all their troops against us as they would like to do. They cannot resist properly in any case, and are sure to be all killed. But if you help in your own small way, my king, who is the All-Highest king, will note what you have done, and he will probably let you do a lot of things in the old way as you used to do before the English came. They pretend that they are very powerful, and they did not want to let me come to see you, but they were not able to prevent it, for here I am you see, and out of pure friendliness for you and pity for your grievances I give you this advice. I expect you will worship me as a benefactor when the time comes, and it won't be long of coming. Yes, in a year or two you will declare that I must have been a spirit-child, and you will make a myth of me like Shippawn Ayawng, your first ancestor, according to your old men's tales! That was what this thief of the world said, and a

great deal more. Night after night he said it. Is it not so?" said the *duwa*, turning to the *pawmaing*.

"Said it! He said it so often that it became a joke," said the *pawmaing*, glancing backwards and forwards from the chieftain to Kirkwood.

"I wonder you stood it," said Kirkwood, flicking the ash off his cigar. "I know some Kachins that might have lost their tempers."

"At first we thought it was the liquor. But when he had gone on repeating it until we were tired, some of the young men got angry and wanted to kill him."

"Yes," said Kirkwood drily, "you are often quite in a hurry about that."

"There was one of our young men who had been a soldier in the Kachin Company of your Lordship's army, who restrained them. He said there would be trouble if the German was killed merely just for talking. He said he knew the English laws, and advised that we should get the German to quarrel first. But he also said it would be a better plan if we arrested him, and brought him as a prisoner to your Lordship. And he also declared that we might very likely get a money reward for it when his talking was made known. So after a time we decided that we would seize him. Also, we resolved that if he made violent resistance, we would deal with him as is the custom in such cases. But that very night he went off without any warning, and next day we found that the girl Ja Taung was missing. Then we really were very angry, and all the young men of the village set off with guns and *dhas* to arrest him. They took two of the best trackers in the village with them, and they followed him till sunset, but they did not come up with him. During the night there was very much wind, and the tracks were lost. We made inquiries everywhere, but it was not for many days that we heard where he had got to. He went straight along the river ridge instead of turning east into China, where he had told us many times that he was going. Then it was that we began talking about how we were going to have our revenge. The village elders met, and decided that there was a 'debt' against Germany, and there were many of the young men who got bamboo staves for the first time and cut a notch in them, which was not to be smoothed away until Maya, or some other German, had been punished. But we heard no more of him, and there were no Germans that came. In the cold weather of this year, however, we heard that the Germans had raised a band of men, and were attacking the troops of the Royal Government. Then we chose a lucky day for a meeting. We were very careful about it. We consulted the spirits both with bamboo slips over the fire, and with *shippa-wot* leaves and with the sinews of fowls. At the

meeting we decided that we would join the Royal Government in fighting the Germans, and so would wipe out our debt. But the young man, Lasang, who had been in the Military Police, told us that there was much drill to be done and much exercising with guns, and that no one was allowed to be absent at night, and there was a great deal of walking about on flat ground, which is very tiring for hillmen. Therefore we decided that we would supply weapons to kill the Germans with, and that is why I have come. But the soldiers at the fort would not let us pass with them. Therefore I and the *pawmaing* have come direct to your Lordship. There are eight guns, and there is an old beer-bottle full of powder for each gun. They are not the long thin-barrelled guns that are fired from the cheek, and they are not the new guns that the Shans make in the hills away to the east. They are well-tried, old, trustworthy guns, all of them flint-locks except two, which fire with caps, of which we know your Lordship can procure large supplies, though we find it very difficult to get any at all, because of the Royal Government's regulations. Therefore we have not brought any caps. Besides these, there are two bags of bullets, each of them weighing twelve or twenty pounds. The lead is very good lead, which we have dug ourselves out of a pit which Maya frequently went to look at. It was the silver in the lead that he wanted, but we hope that one of the round balls will settle our account with him. All these — guns, powder, and bullets—we beg that you will accept and make good use of. We should have liked our young men to go with the guns and use them themselves, but Lasang, who was in the Military Police, said it would take them many moons to learn the prescribed exercises. But he said it would be well to supply the Royal Government with some one who could point out Maya, so that we might be sure he was killed. It would be best if he were killed with one of our guns, for that would make the best end of the debt, and smooth out all the nicks in the bamboos. So two of the best trackers in the village have come with the party, and we hope that the Royal Government will accept their services. They can follow a trail over any country even in the driest weather, and supposing Maya was killed by some other Government service man, they could, at any rate, identify him, and we should be able to hold a feast in the village when we knew that Maya was done for. It would be a great satisfaction. Therefore we hope your Lordship will issue an order for the passage of the arms past the frontier, and that your Lordship will accept them, and also will enrol the two trackers in the Royal Government forces."

It needed all Kirkwood's experience of the touchiness of the hillmen to listen with

proper gravity to this long tirade, but when the *duwa* had finished he replied with perfect solemnity: "It is very gratifying to me to find that you are so loyal to the British Government. You are not in the administered territory, and therefore it was not necesary for you to concern yourselves about the war. The Germans are a very powerful people, and there are a great many of them. They have been preparing for this war for a long time. Meier, the German, who came to your village, made no secret about that. They have gathered together great quantities of all kind of arms, and they have tried in all manner of underhand ways to raise trouble for us by the most unseemly intrigues and lies. It is very gratifying to me personally that you should be prepared to join in fighting them. Fortunately it is not at all likely that the Germans will ever be able to create trouble in this province. Therefore we shall not need the recruits which you have so promptly offered us from your territory. Fortunately, too, the Government is well supplied with arms and ammunition. Nevertheless, it is always well not to be too confident, and I shall therefore advise the Local Government to accept your offer of arms. They will certainly not be wanted immediately, but in anticipation of the sanction which I have no doubt I shall receive, I will issue an order for the passage of your eight guns. They will be brought in here and stored in the quarter-guard, and I will give you a receipt for your warlike supplies. Your men can either bring them in themselves, or they can be brought in by the guard on the first opportunity. Until I have received instructions I cannot definitely promise that you shall have them back, but I have little hesitation in saying that I shall be authorised to assure you that when hostilities with the Germans are over, they will be restored to you with a suitable acknowledgment of your loyalty."

"I am very glad," said the *duwa*—"and how about the trackers?"

Kirkwood bent over his desk as if he were writing out the order. "I am not prepared to say what we shall do about the trackers. The Germans are very numerous. There will be no difficulty in finding them. They have more men in their armies than there are people in the whole of Burma. Meier has very likely been called out to fight. But it is also quite likely that he is no good at fighting, and that he has been employed in more sneaking spy-work somewhere else. Your trackers are without doubt very skilled, but they might spend the rest of their lives in strange countries trying to find him. I think you had better take them back to your village. But I will make a note of their names and report them to Government. Later, if opportunity offers, they might be accepted."

"It shall be as your Lordship orders. One of the trackers is Makam, the man

who accompanied your Lordship when you went to kill the tiger that carried off one of our buffaloes."

"Makam, — I remember Makam very well. He is a splendid man at that sort of work. But there is a difference between following the track of a tiger in the desert jungle and trying to find the trail of a man in the wide wide world among many thousands of other men."

"It was Makam who followed the footprints of Maya for many miles, when we pursued him from the village," said the *duwa* half reproachfully, half in resentment. "He is already acquainted with the boot-markings of Maya."

"Yes, but Meier is evidently a very cunning man. He has no doubt made haste to get himself another pair of boots."

"It may be so, but we have our debt to pay. We also hate the Germans. Still, it shall be as your Lordship wishes. But the guns you will take and the powder?"

"Certainly. They shall be carefully looked after. Will your party bring them in, or shall they be handed over to the guard?"

The *duwa* hesitated. "I should like to bring them here, but there is the difficulty about food. It is different from what it used to be in the old days. Then we took food wherever we wanted it. Even now I am afraid my men have not much to eat. Moreover there is the toilsome flat road. It is so level that it exhausted even me. Some of my men have had no experience over such roads, and moreover it is very hot. They would probably drink a great deal and make a noise. Your Lordship does not like noise, I know. When we had the spirit feast in the village, you said you could not sleep. That was on the third night, so you had had time to consider the matter."

"Yes, I said nothing on the other two nights, did I? and I did not know how many more nights were coming. However — well, here's your order. They will stamp it with the office seal outside. You are to hand over eight guns, eight [reputed] quart bottles full of gunpowder, and two bags of bullets — that's right, isn't it? And the guard will give you a receipt for them."

"But they will not be kept at the Fort," said the *duwa*. "They will be used against the Germans. Three generations have used these guns."

"Oh, they will certainly be brought here, and if any Germans come we'll ask you to come down here to fight for us. That would be a pleasure to you, wouldn't it?"

"Yes, if only we could get Maya."

And that is how it comes that there is a rack of very interesting old guns at the quarter-guard in Mathibu. The Kachins had never heard how the Boches treated the Hereros, but they had an idea, from their experience of Herr Meier, that it was best to thin them out.

J. George Scott.

TAKORADI.

"I've no instructions about them at all so far," said the Assistant District Commissioner, "though code messages have been coming through all day."

It was the early evening of the 5th August 1914. At 8.30 A.M. a copy of the court official telegram announcing that war had broken out between England and Germany had been posted on the Court House door of the little coast town of Takoradi. I suppose that all of us—Evans, the small A.D.C., who looked years younger than his age, Brown of the Bank, and myself—after the shock of such staggering news had a little worn off, were beginning to think what it meant to us personally.

"I had a long telegram this afternoon all about your job, Brown," continued the local Pooh Bah; "and as that confounded code-book hasn't been brought up to date, I had to wire about one word, 'moratorium,' which seemed to be the key to the thing, and try not to give myself away. It's nothing to do with the Mission, at any rate."

"What do you think they will do?" asked Brown.

"Why, nothing. What can they do, cut off in an out-of-the-way station like this? What can any of us do, for that matter, except sit tight at the end of a telegraph wire and await instructions?"

We three were all pretty tired as we sat on Pooh Bah's verandah. It seemed so restful, looking out over the lagoon and beyond to where the fetish hill Mankwadi gradually faded in the evening glow. Lights began to show in the little town below the bungalow, and the last of the sea breeze bore faintly to us the song of the boat-boys working overtime to land cargo from a coasting steamer in the roadstead.

The Mission to which reference had been made was an alien concern ostensibly neutral, which combined missionary zeal in the "bush" with profitable trading activity at the port.

To us, sipping our drinks, entered noiselessly Kofi, Pooh Bah's steward.

"The Superintendent want you, sar."

"Where he live, Kofi?" asked Evans, uncurling himself from a deck-chair.

"He lib for back verandah, massa."

"I'll just step out for a minute and see what he wants. Those people up at Ogwan are a bit excited over their stool palaver, and we don't want a riot on our hands just now. Boy, pass whisky-soda for these masters."

Evans went into the chop-room, and I congratulated myself that my job did not mix me up with the interminable intrigues of native politics.

After a few minutes he returned with a telegram in his hand, and, sitting down under the punkah lamp, wrote out a reply. Superintendent Amari stood in the doorway.

"All right, Superintendent," said Evans; "send the men off one time under Sergeant Mensah. Stop at the post-master's on your way down, and get this sent off to Accra without delay."

Superintendent Amari of the Gold Coast police saluted and withdrew.

"Good man, Amari," said Evans, subsiding into his deck-chair, "he got his men ready within half an hour."

"What's it all about?" said I.

"Oh, another stunt at Accra; read it yourself as you're nearest the lamp."

I took the form and read aloud. It was addressed to the Superintendent.

"Urgent priority. Send every fit available man Accra immediately. Consult D.C., and report time of departure."

"How many are going?"

"Twenty-eight, which leaves only Corporal Musa, my orderly, and one man with guinea-worm to hold the fort. And of course there's Amari himself."

"What about the guard for the Bank?" began Brown.

"The Bank must take its chance like the rest," replied Evans, "until I can think of something. Wait a minute!" he exclaimed presently; "to-morrow I'll make out a list of all the men in this town who are 'known to the police,' and swear them in as special constables. I'd use the prisoners too, only I can't trust the warders not to make fools of themselves."

"And the Boy Scouts?" asked Brown, who had recently formed a troop of these auxiliaries.

"Well, that's up to you, Brown, but you might post a few at the Bank. What I fear is the Kroo boys. I've already seen a deputation of their headmen, and they say they can't answer for the boys if the rice gives out. The Mission has already cut down the ration, as the town is short of rice, and heaven knows when we'll get supplies. But, on the other hand, I hear there is plenty of rice at the Mission, and they may be thinking of making a 'corner' in it. You're both chopping with me to-night, so we can talk things over."

We stayed for dinner. It was about 9 o'clock when we heard hurried footsteps approaching the bungalow and mounting the verandah. It was the Superintendent again.

"Well, Amari, anything gone wrong?"

"The men left two hours ago, sir, but the wire's down; they can't get the message through to Accra."

"There's the coast line."

"Down too, sir."

"A remarkable coincidence, eh, Superintendent?"

"There's more than that, sir." Amari hesitated, and glanced at the unofficial Brown.

"Carry on, Superintendent," said Evans, interpreting the

look. "We're going to mobilise Mr Brown's Boy Scouts."

"Well, sir, I've got it from a pretty good source that there's going to be an attempt made to get off to Togoland in a surf-boat to-night by Mr Struve and some other Germans at the factory."

Evans sat up: there is nothing seemingly that is beyond the scope of a D.C.'s employment, as I've heard him say.

"Do you think this is true?"

"I think it is, sir, for as I was coming up Corporal Musa reported that a boat's crew were collecting on the beach. I sent the corporal back to the barracks to put off his uniform, and see if there was anything unusual happening at the factory."

We all got up at this and went on to the back verandah. Half a mile across the valley stood the Mission factory. It was well, or, as it seemed to us, unusually well lit up, and the lights seemed to shift about from room to room, though this, towards bedtime, was nothing out of the common.

"Where did Corporal Musa say the boat-boys were?"

"At the far side of the Customs' beach, where the factory surf-boats lie."

"Then to-night's the night!" exclaimed Evans; "who's for the beach, boys?"

Half an hour later the same party sat in the lee of a canoe on the unsavoury sands of Takoradi. It was a night of fitful moonlight, and far to the north the lightning gleamed over the "bush" of the cocoa district. The land breeze had now set in and chilled us with its damp, while the sea, broken on the reef, shot up in miniature foamy waves at our feet.

Our hurried plans were completed; we knew that somewhere within hail the Superintendent and Corporal Musa were watching, and that farther off a few of Brown's Boy Scouts, dressed only in their cloths, were on outpost duty. But we did not suppose that the presence of three white men, gathered together under such unusual circumstances, would escape the notice of any prowling native, or, above all, of the boat's crew, if they were on the look-out.

It struck me that to sit and wait for escaping patients of mine on a smelly beach in the middle of the night was strange employ for a middle-aged Medical Officer, and equally strange that the friends with whom we played tennis should be setting out in this fashion for their own colony, to which they had never seemed the least anxious to return.

Then I realised uncomfortably that none of us were armed, and that the Germans probably had revolvers. This conclusion was shared by Evans, who assured me that the presence of a medical man might come in handy later on. "But," said he, "unless we catch 'em in the act we have no case, and I fancy it won't

be difficult after this to separate the sheep from the goats, —in this instance, the Prussian from the Swiss."

I began to feel very drowsy; even the smell of innumerable fish-ovens in the native town acted rather as a sedative than as an irritant. My pipe dropped from my mouth, and I pulled myself up with a start and idly watched a falling star low down out to sea, off Takoradi point, and wondered at its portent.

"Did you see that light?" whispered Brown, for we had all quite naturally dropped our voices like men engaged in some nefarious midnight enterprise.

"Falling star you mean," I replied.

"Yon's no' a falling star, man" — Brown comes from somewhere in the West of Scotland—"I doubt it's a ship's flare." We were all wide awake now, and presently saw a glimmer of light kindled from the point. We looked at our watches; it was 11.30.

"They'll not come this night, I'm thinking," said Brown, and we were pretty much of his opinion. Then, as we held a council of war under that weary canoe, a figure moved between us and the skyline. It was Superintendent Amari.

"They're gone, sir," said he to Evans, who was now on his feet.

"Who are?"

"The boat-boys."

"Damn!" began Evans, "they've fooled us properly. Have you seen the factory?"

"Lit up still, sir."

We concluded to quit, as they say on the other side. A heavy dew was falling, not a light showed in the native town; the noise of harmoniums was stilled in the clerks' quarters; only the cry of the fruit-bats circling round the ancient palaver tree in the market-place remained to make night hideous.

We made for the factory, whose ill-timed illumination seemed to mock us. But this was not the worst. Pinned to the locked door was a scrap of paper with the words in neat handwriting—

"Deutschland über alles."

I pulled it down and was about to tear the paper to shreds when Evans stopped me. "This," he declared, "will be documentary evidence in the case."

There are times when one loathes the legal mind.

Well, to finish now with the Mission factory, Evans hoisted the Union Jack over it in the morning, and the sick constable with his carbine and bandaged leg squatted on the doorstep.

. . . . . .

As a rule I wake early in the Tropics, but slept late next morning till awakened by the syren of a steamer hooting for all she was worth, like a liner bringing in the New Year on the Clyde. While I was dressing, Evans came across from his bungalow with his field-glasses.

"Have a look at that boat," said he. I focussed the glass and made her out to be the *Willi Woermann*, a small trader, flying the British flag

upside down. What in the world was a German ship doing in Takoradi Bay, and above all, what was the meaning of that flag? But we agreed that she wanted either a doctor or the police, possibly both.

When we got down to the scene of last night's fiasco there was quite a crowd of natives gathered on the shore, laughing and clapping their hands. Soon afterwards we pushed off in the Customs' boat, Evans with his orderly, the Superintendent, the boarding officer, and myself. As we drew nearer we saw a row of grinning black faces leaning over the side, and several white faces, not grinning, looking out of the port-holes.

We tied up on the other side of the ship, a mammy chair was lowered, and we made the usual undignified ascent to the main deck. Here we were greeted with an impressive salute from a gigantic Kroo boy, clad only in a loin-cloth and a German topee.

"You be de big Commissioner?"

Evans admitted that he was.

"Where's the Captain?"

"Captain he no lib, sar, he be German; I be captain now."

It's no use to interrupt a native, for he gets his say in the long-run; but seldom can a Kroo boy have had such an attentive audience. His story came to this: he and his crew were shipped at Sierra Leone as usual to work the ship down the coast. When beyond Berracoe they got the news of the war, and at once demanded to be put ashore at the nearest British port. The German skipper and his engineer told them to go to hell, or its Teutonic equivalent, whereupon the Kroo boys seized the ship, locked up the officers, and headed for Takoradi.

"Morning time," continued the headman, "we see canoe near de river and we t'ink we get plenty fish" — he pronounced it "fiss." "Here we see four five white men lib for canoe, so we go softly, softly, an' by-an'-by dem white men laugh an' sing an' point to de flag. Then I t'ink dey no be proper white men but Germans. So I stop de engine and ask 'what's matter?' They say, 'Where de Captain?' and I tell him Captain he be sick."

"Where did you put the Captain?" we asked.

"Massa, we put all German in No. 1 hold under de hatch. Then de canoe come very near an' I see plenty plenty gun, but de gun no lib for dere hand, gun lib for canoe"—they had evidently put their revolvers on the thwart,—"they say, 'Headman, lower de mammy chair,' so I say, 'all right,' an' I lower de mammy chair quickly, an' de canoe break, an' all German men lib for water. Soon dey catch rope an' come aboard all same black man, an' dey curse plenty too much, massa. But de man who speak for canoe who got big belly"—indicating a person of ample girth—"I no look him again, I t'ink one dam shark chop him. I look all men proper (watch them),

and say, 'Massa, Captain want you,' an' dey say, 'all right.' Den all boy take German to chop room (saloon), an' dey say, 'Massa, wait small time, we go call Captain.' Then I go for door, an' say, 'you be tomfool, dis be English ship, I be Captain;' den I lock de door."

This then was how we recovered our Mission friends who had given us the slip the night before, and got out to sea in their canoe at the river's mouth. Their next journey was under escort. The *Willi Woermann* henceforth sailed the seas as the *Lady Clifford*, taking motor-lorries and supplies to Togoland. The crew were, I hope, suitably rewarded for their double capture. Evans sent in an official report of the whole matter in due course, but up till now the watchers on the beach of Takoradi have not received the thanks of the Colonial Government. Nor do they expect it.

C. H. P. LAMOND.

MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD.

"THE CHAMPION OF THE LIBERTY OF THE WORLD"—MR GEORGE'S NEW RÔLE—THE BROKEN TREATY OF VERSAILLES—THE LESSON OF MR GEORGE'S CAREER—AN UNTRAMMELLED AUTOCRAT—"CÆSAR'S WIFE" AND THE MARCONI SCANDAL—THE DECAY OF PARTY WARFARE—THE COMEDY OF LEAMINGTON—THE PARTY CHEST—MR GEORGE'S FUTURE—THE ART OF GOVERNMENT—THE UNREALITY OF HOME RULE—THE AGRICULTURAL RELIEF OF ALLIES.

IF we may believe what Mr George told a reporter at Marseilles, he went to San Remo as "the champion of the liberty of the world." Who appointed him to this office he does not tell us. We suppose that the office and the title were of his own choice. And we can more easily estimate the strength wherewith he bears the self-imposed burden when we remember that he asks the aid of no others than of his eminent secretary, Mr Philip Kerr, and of that great statesman and patriot, Lord Riddell, a nobleman who (we believe) holds no public office, and who always accompanies the Prime Minister to the deliberations of the Supreme Council.

Mr George, then, is "the champion of the liberty of the world." He is much else besides. He is Prime Minister and Supreme Autocrat of Great Britain. He rules his Cabinet, the Houses of Parliament, and the country with an ignorance and an assurance which are all his own. The members of his Cabinet are content, it seems, to accept his instructions. He is to all intents and purposes his own Foreign Minister. At San Remo he spoke with his own voice and in his own name. He forgot, as he always forgets, that he lives and serves under a monarchy. He forget, as he always forgets, that Lord Curzon is still—in title at least—our Minister of Foreign Affairs. And as he dismisses from his mind both King and Cabinet, so he treats the House of Commons with contempt. "The champion of the liberty of the world" is not to be argued with. It may be true that he knows nothing about the world whose liberty he champions, that foreign countries are as strange to him as foreign languages, that he is at home nowhere save in Wales. But he is the elect of the people.

Before he visited San Remo he thought he had put France for ever in her place. No sooner was a hand laid upon Frankfort, that ark of the covenant, that sanctuary of the Jew financier, that home of Sir Edgar Speyer, our distinguished Privy Councillor, than Mr George was loud in his protestations. He was

ready to prefer a false enemy to a true friend. He forgot in a moment that he had set his signature to the treaty of Versailles, and was prepared to renounce the most solemn engagements of Great Britain at the bidding of Germany and of Mr Keynes. Now treaties are nothing, if not binding. When Mr George signed the documents at Versailles, he accepted, on England's behalf, the responsibility of insisting that the provisions of the treaty should be loyally and accurately carried out. He pledged our honour, the honour of England, to France and to our other Allies, that the agreements which we had made should be duly respected. But the last man who had access to his ear whispered that the treaty was hard upon Germany, suggested that France was wholly unreasonable in demanding the indemnities and reparations which had been allotted to her, and persuaded him to come forth as the champion not of liberty but of the Boche. France was not unnaturally indignant. Having suffered more than any other country in the war, she saw justice denied her, and expressed with an admirable candour the dislike and distrust inspired in her mind by "the champion of the liberty of the world."

However, Mr George never holds an opinion longer than it seems to ensure him a breath of popularity, and he hastened to repudiate his new friendship for Germany. At San Remo he delivered the speech which he thought would be acceptable to M. Millerand. He declared, as he has declared a hundred times before, that Germany should pay to the uttermost farthing. He did not renew the promise, which he gave in the stress of a general election, that he would search Germany's pockets. But he was loud, for the moment, in denunciation of the Boche, and the French pretended to take comfort in what he said. An illusory comfort, surely, since the next speech which he delivers to another audience will be merely an echo of something else, and will probably give a flat contradiction to what was said at San Remo. And when we remember that this champion of liberty affects to speak with the voice of England, we may estimate the damage which he does to England's honour, the danger in which he involves our British Empire.

The career of Mr George should afford a salutary lesson to the friends of democracy. He stands where he does as the elect of the people. And he was elected by the people in 1918 because he made many rash promises, which he had not the power nor the intention to carry out. He cannot be removed for some years yet by any process known to politics, and he has ample time before him in which to complete the work of bringing upon us suspicion and distrust, which he has begun. The most

reckless autocrat that has governed England for many a long year, he pretends to derive his power from the people, which he defies, and his career will be chiefly useful, because in the period of reaction, to which all good citizens look forward, he will be held up as an awful warning to all those who prate about the blessings of popular government.

And Mr George's whole career cries out in eloquent protest against the position which he has filched for himself in the State. The friend of the Boers, who escaped from a minatory mob in a policeman's uniform, he would have avoided war in 1914 had he dared, and he misled the public opinion of France and England by saying that we went to war merely for the sake of Belgium. A Chancellor of the Exchequer who made finance the vehicle of class hatred, he has seen his monstrous People's Budget, as he called it, exposed for the piece of hypocrisy that it was. The tree of land valuation, whose branches were to be heavily laden with refreshing fruit, is now cut down to the earth. Of all the measures which have let loose the turbid torrent of his eloquence, scarcely one is effective to-day. Whose fault is it that we are faced by a housing problem? Mr George's. By whose deliberate contrivance was it that the working classes were persuaded to believe themselves the victims of a gross injustice, and to demand without toil or price the possessions of others? Mr George's. Indeed, to Mr George's account we may set down the most of the evils which beset our society; and in spite of it all he is to-day an untrammelled autocrat, with Cabinet ministers patiently waiting to take his commands, and to carry out his wishes in all humbleness of spirit.

There is still another reason why Mr George should not be entrusted with full powers to make or mar the British Empire. There was a time when he insisted with praiseworthy iteration that "Cæsar's wife should be above suspicion." And having thoughtlessly cast Mr Joseph Chamberlain for the part of Cæsar's wife, he proceeded to vilify him without stint and without reason. He did not exact from himself the same scrupulous conduct which he exacted from others. The man who without knowledge or justice attacked Mr Chamberlain, was presently besmirched himself by the Marconi scandal. Bitterly did he then complain of the lies which were passed from one foul lip to another. Eagerly did he renounce the high standard which once he had set up for Cæsar's wife. It was of no avail. The "lies" were found to have in them a solid basis of truth, and Mr George emerged from the inquiry so deeply marked that, had he not been protected by a coat of triple brass, he would never again have entered the field of politics. And it would

have been vastly better for Great Britain had he remained outside. The Marconi affair was in a sense a test of the character of English politicians. The mere fact that Mr George and Sir Rufus Isaacs were not asked to purge their offence has done our country an irreparable injury. It has sensibly lowered the level of our public life, and the constant advancement of the two speculators has proved that politics is after all nothing else than levity and cynicism. Mr George, when put upon his defence, pleaded, it will be remembered, that he was a poor man. Sir Rufus Isaacs, placed in the same awkward situation, confessed that he was a rich man. The one plea was as absurdly irrelevant as the other. Neither could deny that he had bought American Marconis; neither could claim that he had been candid in his treatment of the House of Commons. And when the House exonerated its erring members, it struck a blow at parliamentary government from which it has not recovered.

It is in no spirit of malice that we remind our readers of the too quickly-forgotten Marconi affair. The position which Mr George holds makes it necessary that we should scrutinise most jealously all his deeds and all his words. He has gathered into his own hands all the power in the State, and it is the business of Englishmen to see that he is worthy of that power. Were his own happiness or prosperity alone at stake, we should not care a jot whether he had or had not enjoyed a flutter with that forgotten worthy, the Master of Elibank. It would be a matter of indifference to us whether he was able to distinguish between speculation and an investment or not. But it is the happiness and the prosperity of Great Britain which are at stake; and we may well wonder whether the demagogue of fluent speech and fluid mind, who allows his audience to tell him what he shall say, who has no knowledge of the foreign affairs which he presumes to direct, who is guided in the business of government not by principle but by opportunity, whose hands were dipped in the Marconi affair, is fit to govern, uncontrolled and unrestrained, the British Empire, and to meddle, without let or hindrance, in the affairs of Europe. For our own part, we prefer him in the rôle, which he has carelessly assumed, of "champion of the liberty of the world." Assuredly he has no knowledge of what liberty means, and but a blurred vision of the world and its boundaries. But he who defends a mere superstition or a solemn phrase cannot do much harm. He who without knowledge and without a plan attempts to govern an Empire may involve in his own ruin all those who have been foolish enough to trust him.

We have heard a great deal lately about the suspension

of party warfare. Pompous politicians tell us almost daily that we are none of us partisans, that we cry and strive not for a faction but for the State. And what the pompous politicians tell us is partly true. There is no party warfare, because the House of Commons has no other duty than to register the decrees of Mr George. Fearful though he be of the ballot-box, he will not permit criticism in the House. Our free and independent legislators dare not speak what is in their minds, if indeed their minds are not empty, lest they should not be safe in their seats at the next election. Therefore they hang upon the lips of Mr George; in whispered humbleness they assent to his decrees; and there is no party warfare, because there are no parties. In other words, the Coalition is no Coalition at all. It is a Radical Government, openly confessed and unashamed. Those who once called themselves Tories, and who have now taken the ticket, are Tories no longer. The respect for tradition, the love of ancient ways, which once inspired their policy, have long since been enveloped in the mist of forgotten things. To-day they are all for "the march of mind." Progress is their watchword, and they pretend to believe, as their Radical colleagues believe, that they may safely pit their little intelligence against the accumulated wisdom of a thousand years. They utter no sentiments which are not Radical sentiments. They pass no measures which are not Radical measures. They have broken definitely with the past, which once upon a time moulded their thoughts and determined their actions. Remember for a moment what the Coalition has achieved during the last few years. In passing the Franchise Bill it created a silent revolution, of which we have seen only the beginning. By giving an equal vote to women, it has taken the governance of the Empire out of the hands of the men, who made it and fought for it, and given it to the women, who cannot bear arms and have no political experience. If none of the church-burners has yet been able to wriggle into the House of Commons, the Viscountess Astor is there, to hold aloft the banner of feminism, and to show that the "people" of Plymouth think it not incongruous to be represented by an American and a Peer's wife. The Franchise Bill was accepted, without comment, by those of the Coalition who professed themselves Tories.

Then there is Mr Fisher's Education Act, happily a dead letter, and therefore not so dangerous as Mr Fisher's expressed intention of purchasing by grants of money the abject submission to the government of Oxford and Cambridge. Not a single Tory has raised his voice into opposition to the dangerous projects of this revolutionary minister, who has been publicly described by

an archbishop as one of whom all men speak well. Again, the Government of India has been wantonly destroyed, on the false plea of "self-determination," though it is known that not more than two per cent of the Indian people take the smallest interest in it; and it has been destroyed, without a word of protest from what was once the Tory party, by a minister in whose veins there flows not a drop of English blood. As in law-making, so in administration, the present Government has expressed only the sentiments of the Radicals, who esteem words more highly than deeds. In Ireland it has carried on the baleful work of Mr Birrell, if we may use the word "work" for a settled determination to do nothing. At the very moment when it is proposing to give Ireland a measure of self-government, if the spoiled beauty will deign to accept it, the Government permits murder and arson to go unpunished, and declares that much may be done by a policy of conciliation. It might as well attempt to conciliate a rattlesnake as to appease the treacherous appetites of Sinn Fein. And is there a Tory in the House who dares to suggest that all that Ireland needs is justice and firm government, that order will never be restored to that country until hunger-strikers are allowed, if they choose, to starve themselves to death?

Of course there is not. The voice of criticism is hushed, and the Tories outdo their ancient foemen in the loud profession of Radical principles. But names last longer than the principle or lack of principle to which they are given, and the wild comedy of Leamington shows clearly enough that, though no man dares to call himself a Tory, there are still those who cling to the title of "Liberal" with a feverish desire. Now, the comedy was perfectly staged, and if at the end it degenerated into a rough-and-tumble farce, the friends of Mr George had no right to be surprised. The Prime Minister's friends went down from London in a special train. They were photographed all wreathed in smiles as they set out on their journey of reconciliation. They were determined to be friends with the friends of their old friend and leader, Mr Asquith. If the olive-branch was rejected, then by all means let Mr Asquith's supporters stand to their defence. And Mr George's colleagues carried their proofs in their hands, so to say. In complete forgetfulness that they were the members of a Coalition, that they owed some loyalty to the recalcitrant Tories who have helped them to make a new and far worse world, they boasted loudly that Mr George's Cabinet has been inspired always by the principles of Radicalism, that it has never professed the smallest interest in anything save class-legislation. Their boast is entirely justified, and not altogether honourable. But to the

stalwarts of the other side the boast mattered not a jot: The Liberals of the true breed don't care for what is done. They ask only who has done it, and they refused to give a word of thanks to Mr George and his companions for the harm which they have contrived. So they shouted down the Attorney-General, Dr Macnamara, and the others, and they afforded the honest citizen, who is not drugged by the poison of politics, an excuse of much hilarity.

"I am as good a Liberal as you," cries Mr George. "You are no Liberal at all," retort the henchmen of Mr Asquith. And they would leave us wondering why they made all this pother about a disreputable title, did we not remember that there exists somewhere a party chest. We know as little what it contains as who filled it. But rumour is eloquent concerning the weight of it; and as in politics the chest is commonly known as "the sinews of war," we can well believe that it is well worth fighting for. Is Mr Asquith going to share it with Mr George? Not a bit of it. Mr George may do and say whatever he likes: he may pass a dozen revolutionary measures, which are dear to the hearts of the stalwarts of Leamington; he may march through Radicalism to anarchy, and with the aid of his Tory colleagues he may tear to pieces the last rags of the Constitution. But he shall not lay a hand upon the sacred chest, which was once tenderly guarded and packed with Marconi shares by his old friend the Master of Elibank. Here, indeed, in the party chest, there is a definite cleavage. They are Liberals who may find support in its weight and amplitude. They are not Liberals who are not privileged to dip a greedy hand into the lucky bag. Thus we arrive at the true meaning of political principle. The chest, the chest is the thing! All the rest is mere rhetoric, and Leamington has decided that Mr Asquith's side shall retain the chest, while Mr George must do the best he can with the rhetoric.

For our part, we care not who calls himself a Liberal, or who keeps the key of the chest. Neither the one side nor the other has any zeal for the cause of Great Britain, and in the long-run it is a matter of indifference which species of provincialism wins. Were it not for the effect of the paltry squabble upon Mr George's position, we might be content to dismiss the episode with a laugh. But the accident of an election and the hazard of the foolish gamble known as democracy have placed Mr George upon the throne of an autocrat, and we cannot but wonder what view our eminent minister will take of the rebuff given him at Leamington. The danger is that it will throw him into the arms of the more obviously moderate of his supporters, and if the Tory party—the party

which once was not afraid to check anarchy—ever be revived, Mr George might insist upon leading it. This would be a calamity, and the issue remains in doubt, since Mr George will decide which course he shall follow upon the grounds of opportunism alone. He has no opinions. Any one, if only he show a majority of votes, may write whatever he chooses upon the *tabula rasa* of the Prime Minister's mind. For Mr George is not a statesman: he is merely a cunning manipulator. As Lord Hugh Cecil said with perfect truth, "the Premier has never been able to distinguish between the art of winning an election and the art of government. He is conciliating this person and shutting the mouth of that person, and he calls that the art of government."

What, then, will he call the art of government in the near future? The Liberal party declines obstinately to summon him to the leadership or to disgorge its treasure. The Coalition, which is no Coalition at all, but a frank surrender to communism and anarchy, has but a small prospect of permanence. The notorious Central Party—central in name and revolutionary in policy—was laughed out of existence long ago. And Mr George will be asked sooner or later to make his choice. Will he go to labour, and say in the words of an unhappy monarch, "You have no leader. I will be your leader"? It is improbable, because labour has long since lost whatever trust it had in Mr George, despite the energy wherewith years ago he preached the gospel of plunder and enunciated the doctrine of robbing Peter to keep Paul in idle affluence: despite the adroitness wherewith he declined to allow the railway strike to be fought, as it should have been fought, to a disastrous finish, the egoists who impel the working classes to ask always for higher wages than they can earn, do not want a middle-class politician to filch their honours and their profits. It seems as if Mr George, therefore, would be driven into the arms of what used to be called the Unionist party. He has proclaimed aloud that he is a resolute opponent of nationalisation, and that he will go to the country, in the fulness of time, upon that issue,—which shows that he thinks that the defence of private property may bring him a hatful of votes. But to-morrow he may range himself upon the other side, and we know no more than that the fate of Great Britain, and of Ireland too, depends solely upon the cynicism of our politicians.

The truth is that all the proceedings of the House of Commons are enveloped in a cloak of unreality. The one point of agreement in those who support the Home Rule Bill, now before the country, is that it has not a dog's chance of being accepted by Ireland.

Mr Bonar Law confessed its inevitable failure with perfect frankness. "We know," said he, "that we cannot settle the matter of self-determination." So far, so good. "You can only settle it," thus he went on, "by something which, I admit, Southern Ireland will not accept to-day." Then why call it a settlement? When the Bill is passed the situation of Ireland will remain unchanged, and the only excuse for the passage of the Bill is that it may give satisfaction to somebody else whom it does not concern. All the ministers who defended it kept their eyes steadily fixed upon the United States, and thus we may plumb the depth of our degradation: we are listening to the dictation of a foreign power, with whose treatment of its own citizens we have neither the wish nor the intention to interfere.

But it was Mr Asquith who gave us, in the debate about Home Rule, the finest example of hypocrisy. With tears in his voice, he deplored the bad state of affairs in Ireland, "unexampled even in the bad annals of Irish disorders." And he did not confess that for that bad state of affairs he, more than any other man alive, is responsible. When he came into power in 1906 Ireland enjoyed a peace and a prosperity such as it had not known for many years. Ten years of misgovernment or of no government at all, under the auspices of Messrs Asquith and Birrell, ensured the Irish Rebellion of 1916. If Mr Asquith has any doubt upon the matter, let him read the report of the committee, appointed by himself, to inquire into that disgraceful episode. However, he is not likely to read it; and even if he did read it, he would with an easy mind shift the responsibility on to somebody else.

Whatever the politicians attempt to do is marred by a lack of candour and simplicity. They are all like the man in Petronius who looked at the cabbage and stole the bacon. When they do one thing, you may be quite sure that they are keeping their eye upon something else; and it is, for instance, because they confuse the art of vote-catching with the art of government that they are profoundly distrusted by the people. Happily, contrasts are not lacking to the bunglings of the politicians. There are practical men all over England who are doing the work that has to be done without fuss and without "back-thought." Among these we may count the members of the Royal Agricultural Society of England, who have brought what relief they could to our plundered Allies, and have made it possible for the farmers of France, Belgium, and Serbia to make a beginning with the work which the Germans hoped they had interrupted for many a year to come. It was, as we all know, part of the settled policy of the Boches to destroy the

farms and the orchards of the countries which they invaded. They murdered fruit-trees with a peculiar zest, and they ruthlessly carried off all the cattle upon which they could lay their hands. And when they were ordered to restore the stolen goods, they pleaded with tears in their eyes that if they surrendered to the French the cows that belonged to them, the German children would lack milk. An argument, truly, which found great favour with our British philanthropists, who like to believe that charity begins in the homes of our enemies. However, the Royal Agricultural Society saw clearly how it could best serve our Allies, and did not rest until it had made an admirable start in the reviving of agriculture throughout the devastated areas. Some £250,000 was subscribed by the farmers of England, and gifts of beasts and seeds were distributed where most they were needed. Much had been done even before the Armistice was signed. Seed potatoes, sent by the Committee to Verdun when the attack was at its most violent, flourished exceedingly, and it is a satisfaction to think that the Boche got nothing of the crop. Moreover, some 9000 fruit-trees have been despatched to France, to replace those wantonly destroyed by the invader, and 1000 head of dairy cattle have already gone to the district of the Somme alone. The Duke of Portland, Lord Northbrook, and Mr Adeane, among others, have done excellent work, and the distribution has been carried out with wisdom and justice. Upon the relief of the Belgian farmers, for example, the sum of £55,500 has been spent, and a cattle-show held among the ruins of Ypres gave spectacular testimony to the great work done in stricken Belgium by the Agricultural Society. At Paschendael, at Kemmel, at many other places, celebrated in the annals of the war, you may now see sheep peacefully grazing upon the battlefields, and picking up a living upon the scanty herbage. Let an expert tell the story in his own words. "Mr L. Boereboom," says a writer in the 'Live Stock Journal,' "entrusted with the supervision of the work of agricultural reconstruction in Western Flanders, pointed out that the Yser Valley, upon which the Committee wished to concentrate their work of relief, had before the war been dairying country, and that the great need of the farmers in this area was dairy cattle, pigs, and sheep. It was agreed that a farmer's qualification to receive one or more head of stock had to depend upon the number he kept before the war, the lists in respect of these details being still available. Ten head of stock held before the war was fixed as the maximum number permitting any farmer to participate. As there were many more farmers qualified to receive stock than there were animals to distribute, it was realised that the recipients

of the heifers could only be determined by lot, and the name of each farmer who had ten heifers or less before the war was put into a box, sufficient names being drawn to meet the number of animals allotted to each village." Thus the prosperity of Western Flanders is assured, and without any help from the politicians. The peasants are returning to their broken homes and wasted fields with a fresh hope and a fresh energy. New villages are springing up upon the sites of the old, and with confidence we may look forward to a restored and happy Belgium. And we shall contemplate the restoration with the greater pleasure because it has been achieved by men who had no other object in view, and who were not ashamed to do good to others, without a thought of the hustings and their intrigues.

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